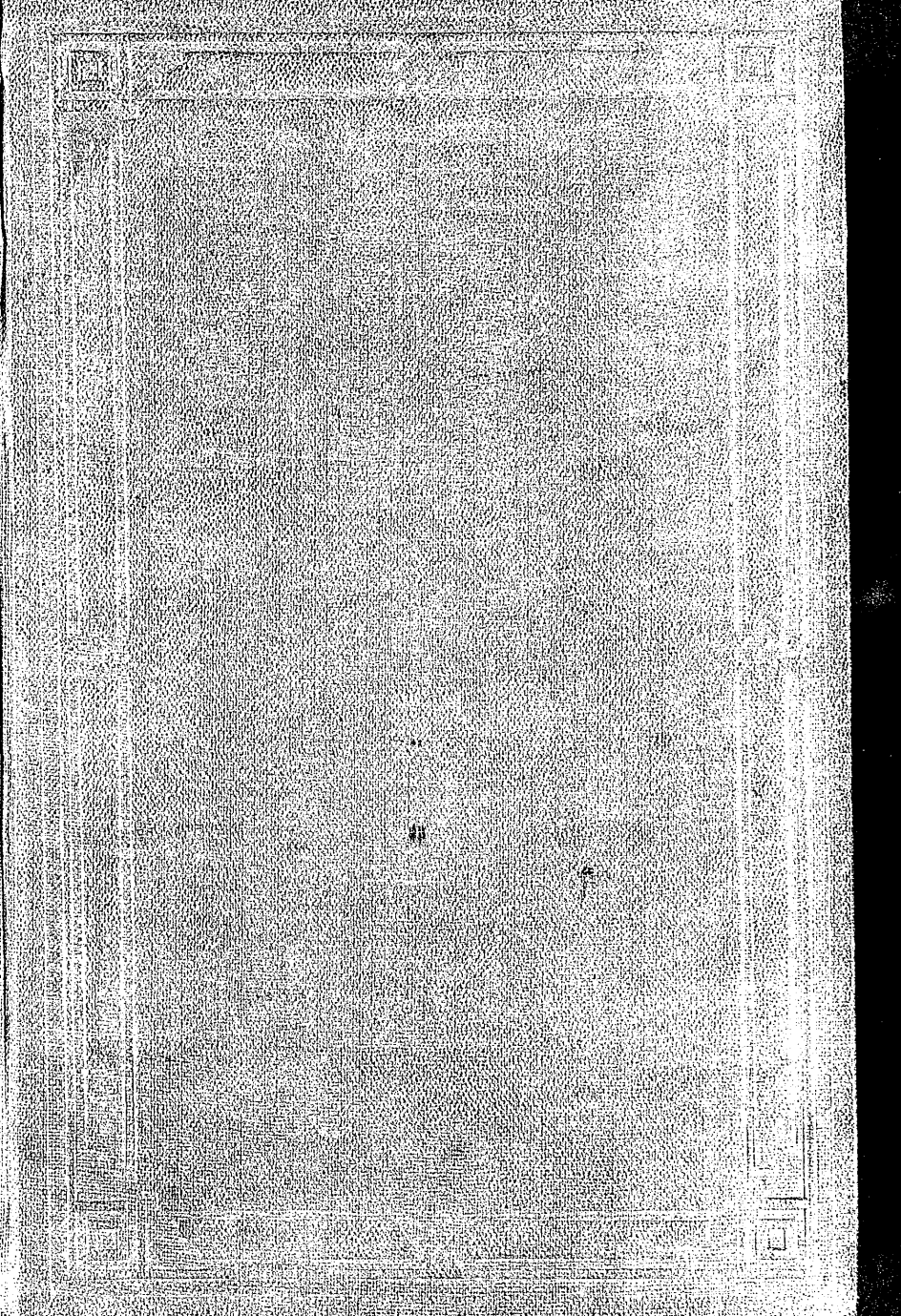




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THE
SUNDAY SCHOOL
H A N D - B O O K :

A COMPANION FOR
PASTORS, SUPERINTENDENTS, TEACHERS, SENIOR
SCHOLARS, AND PARENTS.

BY
ERWIN HOUSE, A. M.

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PREFACE.



THE author of the present volume is a Sunday school teacher. For many years, he has acted each Sabbath in this capacity or in that of superintendent. What he has written is from the school-room, and has at least the merit of experience and observation. What he has selected and arranged is from the pens of men and women who have labored long as well as successfully in the religious training of the young. In some sense, therefore, the book may be called a Sunday school experience book.

Twice requested by State Sunday school conventions to prepare the work, refusal, if not impossible, would have seemed discourteous. Those who are familiar with Sunday school literature will recognize in the two papers on the Art of Questioning and the Art of Securing Attention the pen of the well-known English writer, J. G. Fitch, Esq. The article on Singing is by Mr. J. P. Colby, and that on Supply of Teachers by Mr. E. D. Jones, both of St. Louis. Other gentlemen, under their own signatures, have contributed valuable papers on topics of their own choosing. Dr. Haven's very able defense, with illustrative examples, of the Uniform Lesson System reached

us too late for insertion in the body of the work, and is therefore placed in the Appendix. It will be prized by his thousands of friends, East and West. To these friends and all others who have given him their sympathy and assistance the author tenders hearty thanks.

English and American publications have been freely consulted in the preparation of the work. Especially have we been aided by the editorial and other articles in the Sunday School Teacher, Chicago; the Sunday School Times, Philadelphia; and the Sunday School Journal, New York.

To furnish in the compactest form the best thoughts of the best workers has been the author's aim. How far he has succeeded is for others to determine. He may be permitted, however, to say that in the preparation of the volume his own heart has been warmed, his own views enlarged, and his own faith in the conversion of children greatly strengthened. That like precious results may attend the perusal of these pages is his ardent hope and prayer.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

H A N D - B O O K .

THE OBJECT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

THE object of the Sunday school is the salvation of the child; to bring him to Christ, to develop in him the life of Christ, and to insure for him a place with Christ at the right hand of the Father. The object is a unit, but the appliances by which this work is begun and carried on are various.

No child can come to Christ except with a knowledge of the way. There is no way except that described in the Scriptures. The child is to be informed, either by parent or teacher, of his need of a Savior. There is to be developed in his understanding and impressed upon his heart the character and work of that Savior, the suffering, saving love of Jesus, his complete willingness and ability to redeem, purify, and bless.

But the object of the Sunday school is not only to bring the child to Christ, but to bring him *now*. Nothing less—nothing more. Nothing more in time or in eternity than this. “Nothing is done while any thing is left to be done,” was the motto of a great man. “Nothing

is done unless my scholars are saved," ought to be the motto of every teacher.

The atmosphere of the school-room should be such that, on entering it, every child, even the youngest, will feel that the aim of the exercises and arrangements is to glorify God, and to bring souls to Jesus. That such a condition can be reached, the experience of many faithful laborers will testify. "Our school," says a Scottish superintendent, "resolved at one time to lead all other schools in Glasgow in raising missionary money. Teachers, male and female, pledged themselves to constant effort. It was not long till the Bible classes, the junior and the infant classes caught the infection. By the year's end the banner was ours. Considering our numbers and wealth we surpassed every other organization in the city. Another school that I knew, resolved on being the most orderly, I might say the most silent, in its discipline. Its order of exercises was printed on canvas, and the canvas unrolled, without creak or rustle, as the time called for a change of the exercises. The superintendent said nothing, the canvas did the talking, and the teachers and pupils instructed and recited in whisper. At last, it came to my mind that if our school could raise the most money for missions, and a neighboring one could produce, as it believed, the best example of order, possibly ours might be the most successful in winning souls for Jesus. The conviction dwelt upon my heart, and at last I gave it utterance. I talked with my teachers, and they were a unit in regard to it.

"Thenceforward the prayers, the singing, the lessons, the direct and side instructions were all with this one aim—Jesus—souls for Jesus. The scholars soon comprehended the new state, and each one felt an obligation to assist. In the efforts made, several of the older boys and

girls were led penitents to the Savior. It was a year of blessed and glorious triumph. We received the name of Immediatists; but we were willing to be called Immediatists, or any thing else, so God was honored and Jesus glorified."

A school unconsciously takes on the spirit of its officers and teachers, particularly that of the superintendent. If the superintendent's heart has a single aim, and he works steadily and faithfully to that, it will not be long till the individual members of the school will make the discovery and respond to it.

But observe, that no converted child can be retained in the school or the Church without constant care and instruction. There must be inculcated in the mind of the child profound Christian beliefs and opinions. He must be informed concerning the character, providence, and government of God; must know of the duties, relations, and destinies of man; of the excellence and obligations of virtue, of the wickedness and danger of vice, of the right use and responsibilities of talent, of influence, and wealth, and of the sinfulness of the heart; the danger and divine salvation of the soul.

And further, the child's heart must be inspired with Christian sentiments of reverence for the Divine Being, and his works and word; with profound love and gratitude to the Heavenly Father, and to the Savior of men; with an active respect and love for mankind, for friends, for country, and the race; and with a profound regard for all that is true, honest, generous, gentle, and of good report.

There also must be formed habits of industry, economy, temperance, self-denial, liberality, courtesy, kindness; in a word, all habits of public and private virtue.

And yet further, this Christian culture embraces scholarship in Bible learning, Bible language and literature,

the meaning of the terms prophet, priest, patriarch, temple, altar, sacrifice, repentance, faith, charity, atonement, redemption, grace, salvation, glory, blessing, and hundreds of others, which occur constantly in our religious utterances. There must be a comprehension likewise of Bible geography, of Bible biography, Bible history, Bible antiquities, Bible ethics, the grand system of moral precepts taught in the sacred pages, and Bible theology, that sublime scheme of doctrines; each and all of these should have their specific place and systematic treatment in the Sunday school.

If all the children in all the Sunday schools in the country, together with all the officers and teachers, were to-day converted and in the Church, the necessity for culture would not be less, but as imperative as ever. Emotional Christianity—a Christianity of demonstration and of feeling may be well enough, but no Christianity can last that has not as its basis an intelligent faith.

The skepticism of the age is to be met by heads clear and well informed, and by hearts sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In this culture the storing of the mind with Scripture passages and the forms of sound doctrine in our Articles of Religion and the Catechism, can scarcely be too highly estimated; for although the child may not at the time comprehend in all their breadth the instructions imparted, yet in the advancing years the time will come when they shall prove a bulwark of defense, and when such garnered truth shall stand forth in more than an angel's radiance, dispelling the darkness of the path, kindling the heart, and preparing the soul for victory in every conflict.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS.

THE SUPERINTENDENT.

IT is not possible that superintendents should all possess the same gifts or attain to the same uniform success. There are some things, however, that it is desirable all should possess:

A Good Character.—Whatever the qualifications of a minister, if his character be not above reproach, his success can not be assured. A superintendent will be known in his character as certainly as the minister. If he has defects, none will know them sooner than the children, and known, how shall he be their leader in spiritual matters?

Every superintendent ought to be a man who is in frequent communion with God. So full, indeed, should his face and heart be of love to God and the race that misapprehensions can not arise, either on the part of teacher or scholar.

He should be a man in hearty sympathy and coöperation with his pastor, and should be as well known in Church-work as in the Sunday school.

A Strong Personality.—It is well to know the name of each scholar, and on meeting, in or out of the school, to bestow a smile or a word of kindly recognition. Especially should the superintendent be acquainted with his teachers. There is nothing that yields so large a return as this outlay of personal attention to scholars and teachers.

One of the most successful of the Chicago superintendents stations himself, as his school is dismissed, at

the door, and manages to shake the hand of each outgoing scholar. Through the week, whether on a visit to a scholar's home, or in a casual meeting, he manifests the same disposition, and all the children love Mr. Moody. New scholars, or scholars about removing, especially need the greetings, loving and heart-warm, of the superintendent.

Executive Ability.—Every school ought to have its rules, the fewer and the simpler the better, but all must have some. And these rules must be executed. The superintendent is set for this work. There, for instance, is the rule as to order. If noise springs up in any particular class, he will exhibit tact in its suppression. He will comprehend that his immediate presence will indicate to the children that he knows there is something wrong, that his ear has heard, and his mind is pained by it. Quietness ordinarily will follow this manifested consciousness. If the noise should be general, an uncommon thing, he will quell it by tapping his pencil or bell, and asking a complete suspension of the exercises.

A skillful driver of horses will communicate his own impulses to them at simple touch of the reins. Straight-forward will be their movement. An unskillful hand touching the same reins will provoke restiveness or obstinacy. Children, no less than horses, will give themselves up to wise driving, or will "kick out of the traces" the instant an incompetent or awkward driver attempts to direct them. Of a superintendent we know it was once quite truthfully if not wittily said: "If he would only keep still himself for one Sabbath, his scholars would be so surprised that they would not be able to make any noise for a month."

The executive capacity of men differs as their temperaments; but experience, a wise observation, and a determination to improve, will help any one, no matter how indigently endowed in this direction by nature.

Self-Control.—Every Sabbath will furnish occasions for the test of temper. Some of the teachers will be late, others indifferent or poorly prepared. If the superintendent's temper yield to irritation, the whole school will suffer. A drop of vinegar will sour a cup of milk; a grain of iodine tincture a gallon of water; a cross word will find its way to every corner of the room and to every child's heart. Nervousness, anxiety, excitability, are as diffusive as electricity. Positiveness is sometimes needed, but the superintendent's face, if ever dark, should have the darkness spanned by a rainbow.

Promptness and Preparation.—In some of our common schools the rules require the presence of the principal at his room thirty minutes before the regular time of opening. The superintendent, as principal of the Sunday school, ought, if possible, to be present at least fifteen to twenty minutes before the hour of opening his school. He ought to come thoroughly prepared on the lesson, and if the blackboard is in use in his school, he ought to write the central thought on it, with some of the subordinate divisions. He ought not only to know what the lesson is, but how it ought to be taught, both in the intermediate and Bible classes, so that during its giving he can furnish assistance and direction if needed, or at the close review the whole school on it. No truer words can be found than these uttered by one whose knowledge of the theory and practice of the superintendency covers a period of twenty-five years:

“Every enterprising Sabbath school has both its excellencies and its defects. They are traceable partly to the neighborhood in which it is placed, partly to the teachers with whom it is blessed or injured, but more to the character of its superintendent. Whoever has vital force and energy enough to carry on a school successfully, will put

upon it a seal of proprietorship as plainly expressed as if he stamped it, 'John Brown, his mark.' The teachers, the neighborhood, and other accessories are the materials which are cast into the mold of his character, and come out of it the likeness of himself. That a school can be no better than its head, is as true as that a stream can rise no higher than its source. The first is as much of an axiom as the latter, but its truth is often disregarded in the selection of one who is to act as a superintendent. An inefficient man makes an inefficient, and, happy for it, a short-lived school. One who is wide awake himself will not be troubled with drowsy scholars. A disordered intellect is reflected in the disorder of teachers, scholars, books, and papers, and in the helter-skelter way in which every thing is done. If these truths would only be recognized and acted upon; if, after a faithful trial of two or three months, in which the well-meaning superintendent finds that he is rather losing than gaining ground, he would have the manliness to surrender his position to some one who is better fitted or better liked than himself, many a school which to-day is dying a lingering death from being superintendent-ridden, instead of superintendent-driven, would go forward with new life and vigor. It is one thing to attract, and another thing to keep. Children may be induced to go for a while to a place where there is much outward appearance of doing something for them, but they will not stay unless something is really done. Their natures crave food, and food they will have. It may be a trouble, too, to keep order, and where disorder is allowed they may be quick to take advantage of it, yet they will not stay in a disorderly school if they can find another and a better."

THE TEACHERS.

Punctuality.—It is just as important for the teacher to be punctual as the superintendent. If you are to take the cars for a journey of a hundred miles you are at the station before train time. To make a good start with your class you ought to be with them before the opening hour. No class will be uniform or punctual with an unpunctual teacher.

Regularity.—If you were book-keeper for a large firm they would not thank you if you were punctually at work Monday and Tuesday, but absent altogether and without cause on Thursday or Saturday. Such irregularity would insure your discharge, for services thus rendered would destroy business. The scholar is a copyist, and aptest in copying imperfections. If you stay away one Sabbath he will also stay away, and thus the disintegration of the class is certain. The rules of the school are as binding on the teacher as on the child. The school organization is a little society, and every one who bears a part in the confederation must know and keep his place.

Cheerfulness.—"A merry heart," says Solomon, "maketh a cheerful countenance," and a cheerful countenance, it might have been added, maketh a merry heart. The iceberg does not more certainly chill the sea about it than the rigid-featured teacher the young hearts about him. "O, I could n't help looking into teacher's face to-day," said a little girl to her mother; "it was so *shiny*." Make some personal query about the health of each scholar, or concerning the health of brother or sister, or father or mother at home, and the effort will tend much to relax any undue severity of countenance, and will give a sparkle to your own as well as to the eyes of your scholars.

Patience.—The muscles of youth are five times as active as those of adults. Boys will play and girls will whisper more than you wish. Then, again, you will discover, perhaps, every variety of temper, disposition, and capacity. One will be obstinate, another stolid, a third shy, a fourth foolish, a fifth willful, a sixth openly rebellious. The exhibition of temper or fretfulness on your part will only aggravate affairs. Naturally quick and irascible you may be, but you may overcome as the Friend did—by putting your temper under guard and refusing to speak till you can think twice. “In a moment of provocation,” says Mr. Fitch, the English writer on Sunday schools, “I used words of taunting invective toward one of my scholars. I was young then. The boy left my class from that Sabbath, and never returned. I might have retained him had I only exercised a spirit of forbearance.”

Have patience also as to results. The fruit of toil is not seen at once. Bread cast on the waters is seen only after many days. The time of rejoicing, though delayed, is yet on the wing, and will at last appear.

Studiousness.—No one is born a teacher. We can not impart till we know; we can not know till we investigate; we can not investigate without labor. Labor is sometimes painful, but every one who is to succeed *must* labor. You have tried and failed. Try again. Success and failure are often sisters. “I have learned more from my failures,” says Ralph Wells, “than from all my successes.” “You perform easily on the piano—your fingers find the places of themselves,” said a friend to a great pianist once. “Yes, but I was years in training my fingers.”

Correct Personal Habits.—Mr. Wilderspin, in his Treatise on Infant Training, states the following: “An infant

class teacher, well qualified for his work, had unfortunately been deprived of one arm by an accident. When engaged in manual exercise with his charge, as often as he raised the uninjured arm, the stump of the other was more or less convulsed, with this remarkable effect upon the class—the children all learned so awkward and one-sided a manner of raising the arms, that it was at length found absolutely necessary for their sakes to remove the teacher from his office.” Thus, in regard to the habits and demeanor of the Sunday school teacher, whether he be polite and courteous, or abrupt and uncouth; whether attired neatly or with slovenliness; whether his conversation be frivolous or profitable—whatever his ways and habits, his scholars will copy him closely—too closely, it is to be feared, in any thing which does *not* “become the Gospel of Christ.”

Piety and Church Membership.—Richard Baxter said “it was awful to see dead preachers speaking to dead hearers the living truths of the living God.” “Unsanctified agency in the propagation of Divine truth,” says Dr. Campbell, of Scotland, “has, in all ages, been the calamity and bane of the Church of God.” “I have not sent these prophets,” said the Lord, “yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.” To teach Christ the teacher must have learned of Christ—must have found the heavenly way himself. He must have *tasted* of the good things which he has to handle, and dispense to others, and his heart must burn with a desire to win souls. When the Bible is the lesson book, and the salvation of souls the object, the teacher ought to have clear perceptions of the way of salvation, and be able to say, “Come with me,” rather than “That is the way.” He must not be like the sign-post, ever pointing to the inquiring traveler, but never advancing to the place to which it points.

The practice of the teacher must accord with his motto, "Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." It is very desirable that the teacher be a Church member, for the Sabbath school is designed to assist in building up the Church; to furnish for her pulpits consecrated ministers; for her foreign work earnest missionaries; for her altars and her homes intelligent and spiritual members. Sabbath school children should have a deep interest in all that pertains to the Church and its operations, but they can not have this interest if their teachers lack it, and the teacher will uniformly lack it if not bound by the ties that hold all who are in fellowship with the saints of the Most High.

Of course, there are times and places where converted teachers can not be had. Rather than go without any, the unconverted may in such cases be for the time employed, but it is not wise to continue them when others, who are in full sympathy with Christ, are ready to engage in the work.

THE LIBRARIAN.

Waldo Abbott says the librarian should be a smart, active, business man, that he should cover or cause to be covered all the books of the library with heavy brown paper, and should have a label pasted on the outside cover as well as the inside, so that the books will not creep into other libraries. There ought to have been added two other qualifications—he should be a man of good nature, and of patience, for both will be taxed.

The librarian should be on hand before the hour of opening the school, should open the library, see that it is in order, distribute hymn-books and class-books before the superintendent is ready for the first exercise, should allow no one to go to the library, and should himself never disturb a teacher or class while the class is engaged with

the lesson. The librarian ought to know the names and character of the books on the library shelves, and, as far as possible, should keep posted in regard to new books, and report on the matter to the pastor, superintendent, or committee having the purchase of new books in hand.

Some schools, instead of library books, distribute papers each Sabbath, or at least four Sabbaths in the month, each scholar and teacher receiving a paper. In cases of this kind the librarian can lift the collection, keep the account of papers purchased and distributed, and attend to any other work to which the superintendent may assign him.

THE SECRETARY.

Ordinarily, the duties of the secretary consist in recording the opening exercises, noting the attendance of the teachers, or calling and marking the roll, placing in the receiving book the names, residence and parents' residence of new scholars. He is to count the scholars in the Bible, the intermediate, and the infant classes, and to make, respectively, entries of the same; to enter in the minute-book the names of visitors, the kind of weather, and the addresses, if any, made by the pastor, superintendent, or visitors.

Of every teacher and scholar he ought, as far as possible, to keep a personal record as to residence, time of connection with the school, etc.; and to every scholar or teacher removing, he should be empowered to give, in the name of the school, a certificate of dismissal, commending each to the good-will and cordial fellowship of other Sabbath school laborers.

In the providential hinderance or absence of the superintendent the secretary should either himself conduct the exercises of the school, or call one who is competent for the exigency.

THE CHORISTER.

It is generally understood that the superintendent is to lead the singing, or indicate some one of the teachers who shall do it. But where it is possible to have a leader of the music, known and recognized as such, it is wise. No matter as to the musical cultivation and taste of the superintendent, it is exacting too much of him to require that he shall be leader of the music. The amount of good that an earnest, holy-hearted, cultivated precentor or chorister can do it is scarcely possible to estimate. His power is scarcely in any sense inferior to that of the superintendent.

What, then, ought to be his qualifications? He ought to be as much interested in the spiritual improvement of the school as the pastor, the superintendent, or the most devoted teacher. Sabbath school songs should be profitable, interesting, and attractive to the children, and at the same time they should instruct, elevate, and make better.

The leader should give the scholars a clear understanding of what they are about to sing, and this by a practical and spiritual exposition, either verbal or written. During the time allotted to the singing or chanting every thing else should be laid aside, and neither superintendent, secretary, librarian, nor other person should do any thing except to engage in the singing, or at least manifest an interest in the exercise.

The chorister should consider carefully the circumstances of the occasion, and the spiritual condition of the school, and so adapt the right song to the right place. This, of course, precludes the idea of singing according to a plan laid out and stereotyped a week ahead. If this may ever do for other classes of religious meetings, it will not do for a Sabbath school.

As to how much time should be given to music should be a question for the superintendent and chorister to determine.

Some schools have too many new pieces, and others too many old; that is, one class is constantly reaching for the new, while the other is always holding to the old. Both are extremes. Twenty-five tunes, says a music leader of twenty years' experience, are enough for twelve months. "Children," says he, "prefer to sing often the pretty tunes that they know *well*, to having a variety of half-learned pieces." It is well to select a dozen or fifteen of the best voices, and meet them occasionally to give them instruction. They can, on festal occasions, take a prominent part in the musical exercises. But the whole school, where it is at all practicable, would be great gainers by meeting once a week to practice new tunes, at which the chorister could give serviceable instructions, and point out vocal defects.

THE LESSON—ITS PREPARATION.

PREPARATION is of two kinds—*general* and *special*. Special preparation claims attention each week from the teacher.

In an ordinary Bible lesson three principal things are to be accomplished: first, to present certain historic *facts*; second, to educe from these certain *doctrines*; third, to *apply* such doctrine to the special cases of the children taught.

Have a plan and work by it. Hannah More says, "Method is the hinge of business; it is like packing things in a box: a good packer will get in half as much more as a bad one."

1. Open your Bible on the Sabbath evening or Monday morning, and at least acquaint yourself with the general features of *next* Sunday's lesson. Read slowly verse by verse. Note the circumstances under which the passage was written. If there are any words of whose meaning you are ignorant, look up the definitions.

2. From your reference Bible compare the parallel texts, and so make the Bible its own interpreter. Is the lesson a dark one? Carry it, as one of our best writers says, to the light of a light passage. Is it a mysterious passage? Bring it under the influence of a passage concerning which you have no doubt, and let it be thus resolved and explained. The preceptive facts of Scripture are best illustrated by Scripture. During a revival season in Ohio, years ago, a minister read the passage, "By his stripes we are healed," and then gave the congregation, in the purity and simplicity of the Bible narrative, the story of the suffering Savior. He used almost solely the words of Scripture. He had scarcely resumed his seat till three or four persons in the assembly, whom he had known to be the most reticent, and the least excitable of all, cried out in the deepest agony of spirit, "O, Lord Jesus, have mercy on me!" He had told the plain story of the Cross—the same story that in simple, unadorned words Peter and Paul had told, and by which thousands had been converted, and the spirit was stirred to its depths.

One of the most successful Christian ministers America has ever produced was Rev. J. C. Tackebary, of New York. His sermons, in a very large degree, were composed of the exact words of the Sacred Volume.

A lady, with whom we are acquainted, who is eminently familiar with Bible doctrines, and who can at any moment give an apposite passage in confirmation of a

truth, has for the most part of her life had no help except her reference Bible. She is also an eminent Sabbath school teacher. In a conversation once, she said, "Texts of Scripture are to my Sunday lesson as the bolts and fastenings to a ship. Unfortunate would it be for a ship-builder if, when his timbers and planks were fitted together, he had then to find his nails and bolts. Equally unfortunate is it for the teacher, who has brought together and fitted to his scholars' mind some spiritual truth, if *then* he has to find the texts for these truths that are to be enforced."

If your lesson is on the prophecies, you can make the New Testament, in its fulfillment of the same, furnish you the amplest material; or if it is on the typical parts of the Scripture, let the blessed word do its work of self-explanation and elucidation. You can not understand Numbers without Exodus; you can not understand Exodus without Numbers. You can not understand Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John without the Prophets; you can not understand the Prophets without Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

3. *Preparation should be in writing.* The use of the pen promotes exactness. It also beds the thought in the mind. The eye comes in to assist in promptly recalling what is written. "My eye," said an eminent English writer, "has helped me on many an occasion when a blur has passed over my mental horizon and saved me from scenes of humiliating defeat and embarrassment." A small note-book carried in your pocket, with the outline of your next Sabbath's lesson in it, will give you the opportunity of frequently reviewing it, and there is nothing of so much importance as the review. This note-book you need not and ought not ordinarily, however, to carry into your class.

4. *Have a scrap-book.* The religious press teems with truths, facts, arguments, incidents, and illustrations bearing on Scriptural truth and the religious life. In all your reading have an eye to paragraphs bearing on your lesson, and cut them out and place them in your scrap-book. The paragraphs so secured will have the merit of freshness, and will yield to your own heart something of their living power. One of the great secrets of Henry Ward Beecher's sway over an audience lies in the fact that he uses illustrations drawn from the lives, the experience, and the business of his hearers.

5. *Keep your scholars in mind.* Prepare for the most diffident and backward as well as the most brilliant; know, as far as may be, the home-life of each one, and the religious opinions and habits of the parents, and have something for the class individually as well as collectively. If possible, visit at the homes of your scholars. The knowledge obtained in visiting, the suggestions and remarks of the parents, their methods of discipline, together with what is peculiar in their general management, will guide you in many of the didactic remarks you may have to make on the Sabbath.

6. *Consult Bible helps,* such as Scripture Commentaries and Dictionaries, Biblical Antiquities, Biography, Geography, Natural History, and Archæology. Consult with your minister on doctrine or difficult points, and obtain from him treatises on volumes discussing subjects not otherwise accessible to you.

7. *Study your own mind and character.* Cultivate your own heart; commune with it. The retiring of the mind into itself produces a state most susceptible of Divine impressions. See that "the fire is in the furnace." Talk through the week with some friend in whose knowledge and piety you have confidence. Mention points

that have perplexed and troubled you, and have them solved; mention those that have stimulated and encouraged you, and so impart encouragement. Realize the truth of Lord Byron's sneer, when he said of religionists, "These people are fired with the heroic passion."

Attend the teachers' meeting with regularity, and learn from comparison of views what you could not learn by solitary, unaided effort. Burden your heart with a sense of the value of the souls of your scholars, and keep in continual view the account you will have to render as to the way in which you labor for them.

8. *Have seasons of prayer.* It has been said by one of the most devout and profound minds in English literature, that an hour of solitude passed in sincere and earnest prayer, or the conflict with and conquest over a single passion or subtile bosom sin, will teach us more of thought, will more effectually awaken the faculty and form the habit of reflection, than a year's study in the schools without them. If prayer and Christian self-discipline do this for the habits of thought, most certainly will they do the same for the habits of feeling. If an hour of serious self-examination and self-mortification, or an hour of devout meditation and earnest prayer, does not set the affections of the teacher into a glow, probably nothing in the way of means can. The greatest preachers have been in the habit of preparing for composition by a season of prayer and meditation. The maxim of Luther, *bene orasse, est bene studuisse*, to pray well is to study well, is familiar to all. Augustine says, "Let the Christian orator, who would be understood and heard with pleasure, pray before he speaks." The pagan Pericles, according to Plutarch, "was accustomed to entreat the gods that he might not utter against his will any word that should not belong to his subject."

If you wish to be *roused* and to bring your whole being into an awakened and exalted condition, have your seasons of prayer in preparation, and especially in reviewing your lesson, and before you go to your class, go first to God, and ask him, for the sake of Christ, to assist you in the work of teaching each one the way to himself, and peace and eternal life.

THE LESSON—METHODS OF GIVING IT.

THE methods of giving or teaching the lesson are numerous. We name and describe those most commonly in use:

THE ANALYTICAL OR CATECHETICAL METHOD.

The catechetical method, or the method of teaching by questioning, is the most common perhaps of all. It tells as little as possible to the scholar. It insinuates information by indirect and tortuous entrance; so that the information is caught and entangled, so to speak, with what is already there, and is thus prevented from slipping out again, as it would through a direct passage.

Sometimes the entire lesson is first read over by the class, and the teacher catechises the scholars individually or in concert. Sometimes a verse is read, and the pupil reading is questioned as to its meaning, or the pupil in turn questions the teacher.

New Testament students need not be reminded that the Savior's method of imparting instruction and applying the truth was of the interrogative cast. When Peter communicated to Jesus the demand for the Temple tribute, the latter propounded a question: "How thinkest thou,

Simon, of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute; of their own children or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free."

In the parable of the Two Debtors, "Tell me," says Christ to the proud Pharisee, "which of them will love him most?" We know the reply, and the crushing application.

Examples of questions designed to refute caviling or malicious inquiries are also recorded: for example, "Why doth this man speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Christ replied, "Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?" "Tell us, Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or no?" was the treacherous question of the Pharisees and Herodians. "Whose is this image and superscription?" was the confounding answer of Infinite Wisdom.

The catechetical method is sometimes called the verbal, the general, and the interrogative.

THE LECTURING OR DOGMATICAL.

In this the teacher has the lesson very much to himself, the scholar being passive in the recitation. Of course, every teacher must lecture or dogmatize to a greater or less extent, but there are comparatively few who attempt it that do not carry it to excess.

It is most generally the earnest, whole-hearted teacher that is the lecturing one. So deeply does he feel the power of the truth, and so anxious is he for present results, that he can not stop for the slow process of catechising and illustration; *impression* is all in all with him; exhortation is the beginning, the middle, and the end of his lessons. Is not his mission to gain over his scholars to the cause of truth? Influenced by these ideas, he may

be seen with a beaming countenance, his eye lighted up with enthusiasm, and with animated gestures, exhorting and warning his scholars, like one who has a message of life and death. But earnest as he is he does not always secure the attention of his class. There are some who have their eyes and minds elsewhere than on the subject.

Two rules should be observed, corrective of the errors of excessive lecture-teaching:

1. Never tell the scholar what he may reasonably be required to tell you.
2. Never tell any thing of importance without drawing the substance of it again from the pupil *in his own words*.

THE ILLUSTRATIVE.

The illustrative method employs particular facts or incidents in the different forms of anecdote, simile, proverb, or parable, drawn from sacred and profane history, life, literature, biography, art, and science. The method has three things to recommend it: 1. It renders the truth more attractive in appearance. 2. It makes its meaning more obvious. 3. It causes the truth to be more indelibly impressed on the mind. Of the Savior it is said, "Without a *parable* spake he not unto them."

THE INDICATING OR INITIAL METHOD.

Take the letters P, P, D, D, and apply them thus: Persons, Places, Dates, Details, or Doings. In this way the historic connections, the *who, where, when, and what* are ascertained. The biographical, topographical, chronological, and historical elements of a lesson are produced in their true order.

Add D, D, and the six letters P, P, D, D, D, D, give the Persons, Places, Dates, Details, Doctrines, and

Duties; in other words, the external and the spiritual contents of the lesson are unfolded. The method is remarkable for its simplicity and ease of employment.

THE ELLIPTICAL.

In this exercise the class close their books, and as the teacher reads the lesson he omits the principal words, and allows the members in rotation, or in concert, to supply them. Let the lesson be the Man at the Jordan, baptized by John, Matt. iii, 13-15: "Then cometh Jesus from — to — unto — to be — of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have — to be baptized —, and comest thou to —? And Jesus answering, said unto him, —, for thus it becometh us to — all righteousness. Then he — him."

The method has some advantages, but is suited chiefly to classes of very young children.

BY OBJECT.

When the Savior answered the crafty scribes and Pharisees, as they tempted him on the question of tribute-money, he made no direct reply, but looked around, and said, "Show me a penny." When the disciples were disputing as to who should be greatest, Jesus called for a little child, and setting him in the midst of them, and pointing to him, said, "Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

When Christ instituted a perpetual memorial of his love and death, he used bread and wine.

All these are examples of object-teaching. Every lesson can not be illustrated by a tangible object, but occasional lessons may be taught with effect.

"I was trying once," said a teacher who was book-keeper in a bank, "to explain to my class the meaning

of the word *coupon*, which had sprung up in the course of the lesson. I gave the usual definition, and in as plain Saxon as I could, but vacancy was on nearly every face. It so happened that I had in my pocket-book a fifty-dollar 5-20 bond, which I took out, and unfolding described the bond, and the little bits of paper with the interest calculated on them, called *coupons*. At once the whole thing was clear to all."

"At another time, in the narrative of the Prodigal Son," says the same teacher, "I carried a carob pod in my vest pocket, the exhibition of which, at the proper time in the course of the lesson, made the case clear as to the sort of husks the young prodigal ate."

The great design is to teach the child more than you can express in words.

"Once," says Rev. Dr. Hall, of Harvard University, "I was walking with my little girl, and showing her plants, insects, and birds as we walked along. We were looking at lichens on the trees, when she suddenly, and without hint from me, said, 'The maples have different lichens from the ash. I mean to see if I can tell trees by their trunks, without looking at their leaves.' So for a long distance she kept her eyes down, saying to the trees as she passed, 'elm, maple, ash, pine,' etc., never failing. The difference was easy to *see*, but the difference could not have been so well expressed in *words*."

Suppose the lesson to be on the value of little things. Borrowing a pin from a boy's jacket, you tell the class to see how sharp, straight, and shiny it is. How many for a cent? How many for five? It takes thirty persons, men, boys, and girls, to make a pin. It is little and cheap, and scarcely valued. So of common blessings, air, light, water. A pin is valuable in fastening on a shawl, good to take the place of a lost button, etc. Bend it and it

becomes crooked. The temper sometimes gets bent or crooked, and so does the tongue, and then they not only are useless, but oftentimes mischievous.

BY THE BLACKBOARD.

The blackboard can be used in a school of any size or grade, and by a superintendent of limited or large experience. The board may be large or small, constructed against the school wall, or of a board, or of pasteboard coated with a liquid solution of slate, which is readily obtained at almost any school furnishing store. In the construction of the pasteboard article some superintendents have two of exactly the same size and pattern, say thirty-two or six inches by forty or forty-eight inches. Of this size they can be carried to and from the school, allowing the opportunity of placing the subject and chief points of the lesson on the board through the week at home. Most superintendents prefer to write the lesson in presence of the school, asking the scholars to indicate points in the lesson. This practice with the younger children can scarcely be commended too strongly.

Occasionally, diagrams or drawings, with various colored crayons, if skillfully executed, will be serviceable, though the main use of the board is in writing down in large, plain letters the central thought of the lesson, together with such catch-words as the teacher or superintendent's judgment may indicate.

Let the singing, the questioning, the speaking all revolve around the central thought, and do not suffer the attention to be diverted to your manner of writing, sketching, or drawing.

The board has a special adaptation in teaching sacred geography. Thus, if the lesson were on the Birth of Christ, draw a rude outline of Palestine, making dots to

designate the location of Nazareth, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem. The rivers and mountains may also be drawn, and thus the school have at a glance an illustration of the journey of Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

So with other lessons. In the review of the lesson, by the pastor or superintendent at the close of the school, the board proves specially serviceable.

THE COMBINED METHOD.

This uses the analytical, the illustrative, the black-board, the object, or any other method, or all, as the nature of the lesson may call. In some parts of the country the schools are supplied with slips or lesson-papers a month in advance of the lesson. On the slip is a lesson for each Sabbath in the month. Thus, for the recitations in January the lesson-paper, which is in the shape of a four-paged duodecimo tract, is issued and mailed in December. A school takes as many slips as there are officers, teachers, and scholars, and all are expected to study at home. Usually the lesson contains from twelve to twenty verses. There is given, in connection with the lesson, certain other passages, or a chapter, cognate to the general theme, which it is expected the scholars and teachers will consider their *home* reading. There is also indicated a passage called the *golden text*, which embodies the central thought of the lesson.

The intermediate and Bible classes are expected to memorize the golden text of the lesson, and also the entire text of the lesson, unless it be very long; the infant class and the superintendent the golden text. Each scholar is expected to analyze the lesson and to give the central thought in his own words.

Let the lesson be Matt. vi, 25-34, "Take no thought for your life," etc.; the home reading may be Ps. xxxvii;

the golden text, Matt. vi, 33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God," etc.; the central thought, *We are not to be anxious, but trustful.*

In requiring an analysis of the lesson the scholar might say: "The Savior exhorts his hearers not to be anxious about food and clothing, and gives six considerations against such anxiety. 1. That the life is more than food—there is a soul in man, and the wants of that soul must be cared for. 2. That the birds do not want for food. 3. That our anxiety can not make us grow taller; we must do our part of the work and leave the result with God. 4. That the lilies are better clothed than Solomon was. 5. That our Heavenly Father knows our wants, and if we do his will he will supply them. 6. That we should not increase the cares of this day by borrowing care from the future.

Proceed with analytical and general questions; thus: What is the first argument against worldly carefulness? What does Christ say of the work of the birds? What is meant by the morrow taking thought for itself? etc.

Then, if the pupils be quite young, give an object lesson, with the help of bird feathers, flowers, etc.

By the blackboard, in writing the central thought in large letters at the top; or change thus:

A Father in Heaven!

Feeds the birds,	Seek first —
Clothes the lilies,	His kingdom —
Knows our wants.	All these added!

Then practical questions: What does this lesson teach? Are you seeking the kingdom of heaven? Are you *first* seeking the righteousness or forgiveness that comes by faith? Are you anxious about the world, or do you trust God for the future?

Instead of slips or lesson-papers, the question book, if used by each pupil at home, will be found a good substitute, only that question books, as ordinarily prepared, unfortunately do not give the central thought, nor analyze the lesson.

THE CLASSES.

THE INFANT CLASS.

THE infant class ought not to be put any where and every-where. It should have a separate room, not too small, not ill-lighted, not poorly ventilated, not cheerless. Too often the little ones have to climb dimly lighted and winding stairs, or go down other stairs, only to stumble into a place which has little or nothing in it that is inviting. Children, especially little children, love the bright and the beautiful; they wish to look into each other's eyes and into the eyes of their teacher, and the more abundant the light and cheery their room, the more they will be at ease, and the more readily instruction can be imparted and order maintained. It is about as hard to inculcate ideas of purity in a low, dark room as to do up laces in Mississippi river water; the more they are soaked the darker they become. We know of two or three infant rooms that have each an ever-playing fountain in the center, around which plants and flowers grow, and whose walls are adorned with finely executed pictures of Scripture scenes. The fountain may not be a desideratum, but it is very desirable that the room should be made as attractive as the main Sunday school room, or as the audience room of the Church.

In some schools a separate room is, for the present, unattainable. In such case, place the children as nearly

alone as may be. Draw a green or other curtain across a corner of the school-room, or take the children into the gallery or into some room of a dwelling adjoining; or, in the Summer-time, group them under the shadow of a wide-spread tree. There is a great charm to children in having their own place, or *their own room*.

Seats. Arrange them in semicircles, gradually rising by steps one above another; or where the semicircle is impracticable, divide by aisles in the center and at the sides, still having the seats rise one above the other. The height of the seat may be eight or ten inches. Some teachers prefer to have the scholars sit promiscuously, that is, boys and girls together, alleging as a reason that better order is thus obtained. Experience, however, does not testify strongly in favor of such a plan. On the other hand, where the boys have a side or section of their own, and the girls theirs, you can often call on the one for responses or singing, while the others are silent, and *vice versa*.

Age. Your scholars ought to be as near an age as possible. In some schools there are two or more departments, one for the children between three and five, the other for those between five and eight. If you have those who are over eight, ask the superintendent to form them into a class by themselves, take them out of the room, and appoint a teacher over them. The presence of a few older heads in the infant room prevents the development of the younger and less informed, and as long as they are in the room they will be disposed to do all the answering.

"I was a long time in ascertaining what the trouble with my class was," said a teacher once. "Disorder and listlessness on the part of the majority prevailed every Sabbath. At last I had six of my brightest scholars

taken into an adjoining room and formed into an independent class. The fifty that remained with me being of nearly equal capacity, now had to depend on their own resources, and, in consequence, attention and development followed almost immediately.

Blackboard. Even with children that are unable to read or to distinguish letters the blackboard is of service. No matter how rude the drawing, the children will catch as many ideas from your chalk as from your tongue. If your lesson is the barren fig-tree, draw a tree, though it be ever so imperfect. Or if you talk of a strait gate and the narrow way, or of a wide gate and the broad way, you can readily enough indicate either or both by a few strokes of your crayon. Here is a narrow or strait gate, and a narrow way ascending, and there is a broad way running down to destruction.

With children that can read and spell it is of still greater utility. Suppose your lesson to be the first half dozen verses of the fifteenth chapter of Luke. Read them over distinctly and slowly, requiring the class to follow in concert. Then return to one or more verses or clauses, and read yourself. Take the first verse: "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." "Whom did these people come to hear?" *Jesus*. "Yes, we will write Jesus on the blackboard. Will some one or all spell it?" *J-e-s-u-s—Jesus*. "That is right. Who were these people? What were they called?" *Publicans*. "We will write Publicans. What else?" *Sinners*. "We will write Sinners. Now we have Jesus, Publicans, Sinners. Tell me something about Jesus, something about the Publicans and Sinners."

Read and treat any other verse in the same way.

The individual method of teaching, that is, the hearing of each scholar recite his verse or part of the lesson alone,

has had wide and thorough trial, and has been as widely and completely abandoned. It is not suited to even a small class, except as occasionally lending variety to the exercises.

PICTURES AND OBJECTS.

Adults will look at an illustrated paper before they will at an unillustrated one, and an article with the verbal and the picture description combined is always preferred. So and much more with children. An engraving or picture, whether plain or colored, whose chief characters or outlines can be plainly caught by the class, will prove serviceable. Sets of most beautiful, large-size, colored lithographs, illustrative of many of the historical and narrative events of the Old and New Testament, are obtainable at almost any of the larger bookstores. The gravest objection to these large-size pictures is their price, and the fact that they are disposed of only in sets, two things which make their sale and use limited. An illustration of the manner of using one of these lithographs is given in the department of specimen lessons, under the heading of *The Good Samaritan*.

As to objects they should not be produced in the sight of a class till they are absolutely needed in elucidating or fastening a thought. We once heard a teacher speaking of the number, size, and kinds of gods worshiped by the heathen. "Some of these gods," said he, "are small, indeed so small that a man might carry a quart of them in his pocket, and not feel the weight much. I have seen some not so big as a boy's penknife. They were made of a kind of clay, and put into the fire, and burned till quite hard. Do you see this"—taking an image three inches long from his vest pocket—"this is one of the little gods of the poor people in China. The boys and

girls and the grown-up men and women pray to such as it is. Could a god of this kind hear or help any body? Would you like to pray to a penknife? It would be no worse for the heathen people to pray to a penknife than to pray to such a little piece of helpless burnt clay as this."

In this case, the image, if it had been produced before any thing had been said about the gods of the heathen, would have lost that novelty which helped to vivify the truth spoken. It was reserved to a time when the attention of the class, if there had been any disposition to flag, was readily kindled to a high pitch.

Register. Have an alphabetical list of your class, so that you can call each boy and girl by name. A child appreciates the honor of individual mention, but heartily dislikes being called "sissy" or "bubby," or "that little boy at the end of the seat," or "that little girl in the corner there." The calling of the roll need not occupy over a minute or two, and in cases of absence you may obtain information that will enable you to make needed and appropriate visits.

Size of the Class. If, as hinted, there is not much disparity of age, and you have abundance of seats, it matters little how large the class is. One hundred or one hundred and fifty are as easily taught as forty. There is vast power in the sympathy of numbers. A hundred soldiers may tramp down the street, and the eyes of spectators will grow brighter and their hearts beat quicker for the sight; but if you swell the hundred to a full regiment of a thousand, that brightness of the eye and that quickness of the heart will be wonderfully intensified. The love of "togetherness," as Mr. Curwen, of England, terms it, is bedded deeply in every child's breast.

Variety. Devise means by which physical exercise can be afforded. The child is a bundle of restless nerve

and muscle, and he will move, no matter what your rules. Let him move as part of the duties of the lesson. Raise your hand and require all to rise, drop it, and let all resume their seats. Let the singing come in frequently, and diversify it by movements of the hands, or otherwise. Now and then the scholars on the front seats, or on the middle ones, or on the top ones, or one or two sections together, may be called on to sing a verse; then let the whole room join together. Sometimes with good effect a single boy or girl can sing a verse alone.

Review your last lesson; practice frequently on the commandments, or on the simpler parts of the Catechism, and now and then let some individual member state a fact illustrative of or connected with the lesson.

It is scarcely worth while to debate the question whether the teacher shall be man or woman; but it is essential that, whether man or woman, young or old, vivaciousness of manner shall be possessed—that there shall be a pleasant, rapid, familiar, natural, stirring style—an ability instantly to bridge gaps, and to prevent those pauses which are the bane of any meeting, but which are pulverized ice-baths to little children's meetings.

Some teachers, as the first movement of the morning or afternoon, say, in familiar tone, "Good morning, children;" to which the class as promptly respond, "Good morning, teacher," or "Good morning, Mr. Smith."

A natural love of children, an intense desire for their spiritual good, a heart of love, and a brain of fertility, are qualifications not to be despised in those who would succeed in the infant room. The old blacksmith, whose heart was as full of affection for little boys and girls as his forge was of red-hot coals, and who could not hammer his iron without thinking of the children as well as his work, and whose dreams at night were of the best ways

of winning the wee people to Jesus, and who saluted and caressed every little five and six year old that he stumbled on in the street, was, after all, the man who outtaught all the teachers of his region, albeit there were many who, in the beginning, prophesied that so old and stiff a man would fail. Gray though his head was, his heart was as young as the youngest who belonged to his class.

As to text-books, manuals, etc., never carry one into your class-room—never use one there. You may read from the Testament, and you may occasionally have a card with the commandments on it in your hand, but leave every thing else behind. Of course, in order to do this, there must be the most patient and careful preparation. The absence, indeed, of preparation will make your labor drudgery, both to yourself and scholars.

THE INTERMEDIATE CLASS.

As to the lower grades, comprising those but recently transferred from the infant class, observe the greatest simplicity of thought and style. The Scripture lesson should be read either in concert or separately, till you are satisfied that every scholar can pronounce distinctly every word of the lesson. Accuracy in the reading will greatly aid in accuracy of recitation. As to general directions:

1. Do not have too many in the class. The perfection of social intercourse among friends is said to be a dinner party of about eight. The conversation is then common property—the guests are fused into one. It should be so with a class. Eight or ten is enough. They should be so arranged that you can play *the host* to them.

2. As with the teacher of the infant class, have a class-book or register, and so familiarize yourself with the full

names of every scholar, that you can call them without hesitation. When it is said of Christ, "he calleth his sheep by name," it means that he individualizes them. You are not to look upon your scholars merely as a class, as a set of ears, each of which is like the other, or a cluster of living hearts, all of which throb in unison. John and William, Mary and Caroline, are as different in their character, in their susceptibility, in their moral being, as in their names.

3. Once in your class, let nothing tempt you out. Do not go to the superintendent's desk, nor to the librarian, nor to the door, nor to the class of your neighbor. If you do go, every member of your class will feel entitled to the same privilege.

4. Be a model of order. To every signal from the superintendent give instant attention. If two boys are talking together and you say, "Be quiet there!" it will make three talkers. But if these two see that you respect law, that you regard its breach on your own part impossible, your example will speak beyond all exhortation.

5. Review the lesson of last Sabbath, occupying not over two or three minutes. A lesson forgotten is a lesson lost; a lesson recalled by each scholar is a lesson retained.

6. Urge the study of the lesson by each individual pupil through the week at home. The complaint is widely made that the Sunday school is inefficient, and must so remain, because it devotes but one hour out of every seven days to instruction. If your scholars study their lesson with their parents at home, this objection may be silenced. The establishment of the habit may cost time and pains. The parents may show no disposition to co-operate. Visit them, and place the subject in such a light that you shall have the help of either the father

or the mother, or the older brother or sister, in the study of the lesson.

7. If disorder of any kind springs up, stop the recitation at once, and do not go on till you have the absolute attention of each scholar. It is worse than foolishness to be talking to one member of your class while other members are talking to each other, or are busy with something foreign to the lesson.

8. As to methods of teaching you can have no fixed one. Sometimes both the subject and the occasion may demand the lecture plan; sometimes the analytic, often the illustrative, and again a combination of the several methods. Your own judgment must decide many questions that neither the books nor your fellow-workers can solve.

9. Occasionally adopt, the week beforehand, a programme of exercises, which let each scholar copy. Apportion to John the *persons* of the lesson; to James, the *places*; to Charles, the *doctrines*; to William, the *duties*; to Samuel, the *geographical peculiarities*, with a simple outline map in pencil; to Henry, a *Bible story*, illustrating the lesson as a whole. A brief composition or two on the lesson would not be out of place or unprofitable.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

Charles Reed, Esq., one of the most eminent Sunday school men of Great Britain, on being asked what was the greatest want in the Sunday-school work, replied, "Spiritually minded teachers, and separate rooms for the Bible classes."

Experience shows that the life and growth of the Bible class depend largely on this possession of a separate room. In many of the Wesleyan chapels of Great Britain, where the retention of the elder scholars and adults proved

difficult, and in some instances impossible, resort was had to a separate room in the church or an adjoining dwelling, and with the happiest results. Classes that had previously vacillated or dwindled, now rallied, and many young men and women who had left the school returned.

There are certain things in regard to the *teacher* of the Bible class which are desirable though not absolutely indispensable. He ought to possess experience and culture. Unless he has somewhat stored his memory with knowledge, and unless that knowledge be rendered available for use, by mental discipline, he will be embarrassed with difficulties the moment he invites the free conversation of his class. He should, moreover, not merely have the knowledge which study secures, but an aptness to teach, and *love for the work*—"a spirit that will die if it can not teach." He ought to have mental acumen and quickness—readiness of speech—some degree of obliging manners, and self command. A man who obstinately clings to some preconceived opinion, and will not relent, is not fitted for successful Bible class teaching. He must be able not only to weigh with calmness every opinion advanced, and to decide upon its merits with impartiality, but he must possess the more difficult faculty of confessing himself in error, and of yielding to a disciple the honor of superiority of judgment. Culture only can confer this power.

Of course, this culture will be possessed by different teachers in different degrees; but all whose hearts are in the work can improve by application. Self-educated Bible class teachers are often among the very best.

Specifically, then, the Bible class teacher should—

First. Devote himself to the study of Biblical criticism, under which are comprehended the facts of the Bible—its history, chronology, verbal meanings, and technical phrases.

Secondly. He ought to familiarize himself with Biblical literature; that is to say, he ought to know the facts connected with the completion of the canon of Scripture; the manners and customs of the Jews, and of other Oriental nations, the arguments in favor of Christianity, the inspiration and the doctrines of the Bible. Sacred geography should be studied with reference to the physical conformation of Palestine, peculiarities of its climate, seasons, and natural history.

Thirdly. The Bible class teacher ought to understand something of ecclesiastical history. He should know the religious state of Palestine when the Savior appeared, understand the more prominent views held by existing sects and by certain ancient divisions of the Church. He ought to know the peculiarities of doctrine existing among evangelical denominations of his own time, and be able to state the differences in unbelief, as of Atheism, Deism, Unitarianism, etc., so as to be prompt to answer inquiries on such matters.

Fourthly. He ought to be a special student of life and of men, a collector and arranger of facts and incidents that will be of perpetual service in his class exercises. He will read some books for the sake of the illustrations they may furnish; others, for the sake of the intellectual quickening they may give; others still, for the development, elucidation, and enforcement of doctrines, which he may wish to introduce before his class.

As to the members of the class, each ought to have a Bible. If it is individual property all the better. Maps and references in the Bible are of great advantage, the former preventing waste of time in the inspection of the large maps hung on the wall. Every attempt should be made to encourage the habit of writing in the class, and taking notes of the chief points of the lesson, or other

interesting matter arising therefrom. Where the practice is begun spontaneously, it augurs well for the scholar, and secures his application and diligence.

The lesson, of course, ought to be fixed upon and announced invariably beforehand, so that every member may know what he is to study during the week at home. To facilitate this study some teachers prepare themselves a schedule or outline of the lessons for the month or quarter, and have the same printed, thus placing a copy in the hands of every scholar. The London, Glasgow, and Edinburgh Sunday school publishing firms, together with several of the denominational houses of Great Britain, issue schedules of this description, and teachers who prefer can adopt them, in whole or in part, either for a month, a quarter, or the year. In our own country we have issues of monthly lesson-papers, to be used by both teachers and scholars. Individual Churches, likewise, of various denominations, prepare lists for their respective schools. Intelligent teachers may object to the use of an analysis prepared by another hand, and properly enough; but considering the present state of Sunday school progress, it is well enough to adopt some one of the printed forms.

The various kinds of lessons suitable for Bible students are, by some, classified under four general heads: 1. The historical lesson; 2. The literary; 3. The narrative and biographical; 4. The doctrinal. Others place them in two general divisions; the first composing the narratives, biographies, and other facts of the Scriptures; the second, the doctrines, which it is claimed cover the four above stated. Following this outline, we would say of the biographical and narrative lessons, that being seldom based on chapters purely practical or didactic, they admit of religious influence only in an indirect form;

while the latter tend at once to the experimental, and invite whatever will touch and influence the heart.

Mr. W. S. Blacket, who has written largely on Sunday school matters, and who, morning and afternoon, has taught a Bible class in London for over twenty years, prefers the first-named form of lessons for his forenoon, and the latter for his afternoon lessons. Where the Bible class meets but once on the Sabbath, a proper mingling of the two is advantageous.

Copious in such matters, even to exuberance, the sacred books will furnish sets of lessons without end or tedium.

First. There are the lives of eminent saints, as Abraham, Moses, David, Jehoshaphat, Josiah, Daniel, and so on. In this case the nature of the study forbids the possibility of limiting the exercise to any particular chapter. A chapter, however, may be nominally fixed on, but it may be read simply by way of introduction. Finishing this let the teacher make a remark or two to clear the way, and then ask for any one to read the account of the birth and parentage of the person wherever it may be found. Then call for the consecutive incidents of the life, going through the whole, in order of time, till the biography terminates with the death and burial of the person. Vary the study by taking up the lives of notorious sinners.

Second. A set of lessons may be arranged on the literature of the Bible; that is, the lessons can be on the manners and customs of the Jews, their commerce and navigation, their military affairs and social polity, their feasts, games, etc. Thus: Analysis of Genesis, The Tabernacle, Scripture Birds, History of the Babylonish Captivity, Scripture Dreams, Levitical Towns, Ecclesiastical Practices of the Early Christians, Mythology of Surrounding Nations.

Third. Another set of lessons may be drawn from the ministry of the prophets, taken consecutively, making use of their prophecies but cursorily, as illustrating the circumstances of their ministry and the times in which they flourished. Arrange according to chronological order of sequence; illustrate by the opinions of scholars as to the prophetic books, their authorship and dates, but guard against entering too deeply into controversial points relating to them.

Fourthly. Make a list of lessons from the *facts* of the Bible: The Deluge, Jacob Blessing his Sons, Elijah's zeal against idols, The Golden Calf, Gehazi's falsehood, David removeth the Ark, Christ's Temptation, Transfiguration of Christ, The Five Thousand Fed, Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, Death of Christ.

Fifth. At times the lessons may be taken from a book of Scripture—why was it written, for whom, for what, by whom? etc.

As to lessons that are chiefly practical, care should be exercised not to introduce subjects likely to lead to mere controversy. Let the verses or chapter be read without note or comment. Then devote a few minutes in conversation on the subject announced. This conversation supposes the most careful preparation on the part of the teacher. Let him next propose a series of questions suited in number to the allotted time and measurably exhausting the theme. Lead on gradually, developing the most prominent propositions included in the subject. On the announcement of the first question—say, for instance, the definition of the term—answers would arise probably on all sides. Secure something, if possible, from each member. Have your questions written in a small book, or on a half sheet of note paper, and under each question the ideas which you have expected to arise, or wish to

introduce. After a thorough analysis of the theme, re-read the lesson, giving every scholar an opportunity to participate.

It will be well, occasionally, to assign to each member of the class some question concerning it, or some topic connected with it, so that when the lesson is regularly taken up, the combined information of all will secure a tolerably correct view of the meaning, doctrine, history, or bearing of the Scripture examined. The teacher should thoroughly examine the points mentioned himself beforehand.

Too many Bible class teachers follow almost exclusively the lecture method of instruction. They themselves prepare thoroughly, and then fall victims to the temptation of doing most of the talking. This is no better than to collect your class together under an announcement previously made that you would deliver them a lecture on the lesson, for it is scarcely any thing else. Of course, such a method has more of the popular cast about it, and will be in high praise among those who dislike the labor of studious preparation; but it can never result in the formation of thoroughly posted or Scripturally fortified scholars. A man's muscles can not be hardened by standing in the gymnasium and witnessing the evolutions of his teacher. He must go through the bars, and up the ladders, and on the spring-board himself. And he who would have his spiritual faculties developed must do something more than sit with open ears before his teacher. He must delve, and explore, and work for himself. In no other way can genuine symmetrical spiritual development be attained.

Others, if they are questioning with any freedom, yield to the habit of propounding *leading* questions. A leading question is one that embodies an answer to itself. Thus,

"Moses was the lawgiver of the children of Israel, was he not?" "Yes." "Your name is William Smith, is it not?" "Yes, sir, it is." At a school where a general review was going on, we once observed that over one-half of the questions put by the superintendent were leading questions.

In the management of the lesson the individual temperament of the class should be considered. Sometimes a bashful young man will timidly advance a reply, but in a voice scarcely audible. Catch hold of it and repeat it aloud that all may hear. Again, another may make a reply only in part correct, or only in part complete. At once yourself complete the reply, and thus reassure him who makes it. Every member, however humble, should be made to feel that he is a constituent part of the class, and that the teacher thinks him so.

Avoid prolixity and the introduction of extraneous matter, keep close watch over the course of remark, and before the tenor of it has widely diverged, strike in with the observation, "That, please, is not the subject now before the class; let us keep to the point."

On the completion of a discussion on a lesson, particularly where much can be said on both sides, encourage different members to prepare written papers, and at subsequent meetings read them, so that the whole class may have the benefit of the comparison and research. He is the perfect man who knows the evidence on both sides, and who knows on which is the preponderance.

The true teacher will, as already intimated, lay his plans with a direct view to the conversion of his class. This must fill his mind in preparing his lesson, and while conducting the exercise upon it. His questions must take their form from it, and his replies must bear upon it. His head must plan for it, his heart throb with it, and his tongue be set on fire by it.

As a step preparatory to leading your class to Christ, instill into the minds of all, in every possible way, and on all occasions, the conviction that the Gospel which you undertake to teach is quite an unearthly system, divine in its origin, implanted in the human breast by God only, and sustained there by divine influence throughout its whole course. Remind each member that he must personally address the Most High, that he must seek the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, must live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and maintain an hourly walk with God.

If you bring in the cross of Christ reluctantly toward the close of the lesson, as a sort of saving clause, to maintain your evangelical consistency, you will fail. If you would move the hearts of those before you, you must give it prominence, you must always keep it at hand for use.

Occupy your class frequently in conversation about themselves. There is nothing which so interests a man as something about his personal self. If you would convince of sin, you may talk long about it and effect nothing; but if you can get within the hearts of your scholars, and quietly show how corrupt is the imagination, how perverse the will, how guilty the passions, and so on, you can, to use a figure, storm the citadel instead of besieging it, and carry it by main force. A teacher will find that an adult class will never tire of consecrated lessons on the mental powers, handled as practical subjects, with a personal bearing, from the same general law, that they themselves are the subjects of the lesson. Such studies eminently assist the ultimate design the teacher has in view—the conversion and salvation of his class; because he will find that as men become capable of reading themselves, and looking within the chambers of their own minds, they will not only become more open to conviction,

but more willing to admit those sacred and heaven-taught principles, which, more than any known laws, are capable of improving the mind and adorning it. Some of the members of the class, perhaps the majority, may be professing Christians. It will in such a case devolve upon the teacher to instruct them in all matters pertaining to Christian living, the necessity of regular personal effort for the salvation of others, the claims of the world on their means as well as on their time, and prayers for its renovation, the need in themselves of temperance, self-denial, self-examination, and all other virtues.

Observe special care in educating the conscience, and afford discriminating rules on casuistic subjects. It is no use to endeavor to avoid such subjects. Men and women will continually question you, in the midst of almost every class exercise, as to the propriety of such and such a course of action. For instance: "Is it wrong to frequent the theater, the opera, the dance?" "Ought we to sell articles which virtue and morality condemn?" "Is it right to utter a falsehood for a good purpose?" "Where is the line that divides innocent from sinful amusements?"

These questions must be answered; and the more numerous they are the better. The answers afford some of the finest opportunities the teacher has to impress his hearers with a determination to forsake the paths of evil and to return to God. The more conscientious they can be brought to be, the greater reason there is to anticipate a favorable reception of Gospel principles. Every quickening of the conscience will be an undermining of prejudices.

The careful teacher will distinguish between casuistic questions and mere knots which are sometimes propounded by men who pride themselves on the exhibition of metaphysical acumen, and whose main purpose is to

confuse; as, "How moral evil came to be in this world?" "What sort of demons were those that entered the swine?" "Who was Melchisedek's father?" and the like. Difficulties there are, and difficulties there always will be in this life; and no sensible Bible class scholar expects his teacher to know every thing, and the teacher sacrifices nothing in saying of some things, "I really do not know."

Merle D'Aubigne had a wise teacher in his young days. His name was Herr Klücker. One day he went to Klücker, and told him a long list of difficulties. The old teacher heard him through, and then said, "Sir, I shall not attempt to relieve you of any of your difficulties. If I should solve them all to-day, another crop would spring up to-morrow. My advice to you is this: You have accepted Christ as an atonement for your sins; now I ask you to accept him as a full and complete Savior in whom you can repose: you may then leave the solution of all difficulties in His hands." This was the means of enabling D'Aubigne to go on his way a rejoicing Christian.

"In our entire kingdom," said a noted divine to a theological student once, "there is not a road that does not directly or indirectly lead to the capital." So, in the Word of God, there is not a chapter that may not be used to point the sinner to a Savior, and every teacher is bound to keep the Savior before the gaze of each scholar.

THE ART OF QUESTIONING.

FIRST, *cultivate great simplicity of language.* Use as few words as possible, and let them be such as are adapted to the age and capacity of the class you are teaching. It is a great point in questioning to say as

little as possible; and so to say that little, as to cause the children to say as much as possible.

Second. *Do not tell much in your questions.* Contrive to educe every fact from the class. It is better to pause for a moment, and to put one or two subordinate questions, with a view to bring out the truth you are seeking, than to tell any thing which the scholars could tell you. Never convey information in the form of a question. We may, for instance, want to bring out the fact that Jerusalem is the chief city in the Holy Land. Now suppose we do it thus: "What is the chief city in the Holy Land?" "Jerusalem." "In what country is Jerusalem the chief city?" "The Holy Land." Here each question carries with it the answer to the other, and the consequence is that they test little or nothing, and serve scarcely any useful purpose.

For this reason it is always important, in questioning on a passage of Scripture, to avoid using the words of Scripture; otherwise we may greatly deceive ourselves as to the real extent of knowledge possessed by the class. Suppose, for example, that you are giving a lesson on the meaning of the Christian injunction, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and that the class has first been questioned as to the meaning of it, and proved unable to give a full and satisfactory explanation of the scope and meaning of these memorable words. The parable of the Good Samaritan has been chosen as an illustrative reading lesson. It has been read twice or thrice by the class in turn, and then the teacher takes the first verse and reads it slowly to the class:

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." Luke x, 30.

Some teachers would proceed to question thus:

Who is this parable about? *A certain man.* Where did he go from? *Jerusalem.* Where to? *Jericho.* What sort of people did he fall among? *Thieves.* What did they do with his raiment? *Stripped him of it.* What did they do with the man himself? *Wounded him.* In what state did they leave him? *Half dead.*

Observe here that the teacher has covered the whole area of the narrative, and proposed a question on every fact; so far he has done well. But it is to be noticed that every question was proposed as nearly as possible in the words of the book, and required for its answer one—generally *but* one—of those words. Now it is very easy for a boy or girl, while the echoes of the Bible narrative just read still linger in the ear, to answer every such question by rote merely, with scarcely any effort of memory, and no effort of thought whatever.

Let us go over the same subject again, first introducing it by one or two preliminary questions; for example: Who used these words? To whom were they spoken? Why were they uttered?

Repeat the question which the lawyer asked.

What is the parable about? (Various answers.) One says, *A man who went on a journey.* What do you call a man who goes on a journey? *A traveler.* In what country was the man traveling? *Judea.* Let us trace his route on the map.

Which way was he traveling? *Eastward.* Through what kind of country? (Here the teacher's own information should supply a fact or two about its physical features.) What should you suppose from the lesson was the state of the country at that time? *Thinly peopled; road unfrequented,* etc. How do you know this? *Because he fell among thieves.* Give another expression for "fell

among.' *Happened to meet with.* Another word for "thieves." *Robbers.* How did the robbers treat this traveler? *They stripped him of his raiment.* What does the word raiment mean? *Clothes.* Besides robbing him of his clothes, what else did they do? *Wounded him.* Explain that word. *Injured him; hurt him very much,* etc. How do you know from the text that he was much hurt? *They left him half dead; they almost killed him.*

Now observe here that the aim has been twofold. First, not to suggest the answer by the form of the question. Secondly, not to be satisfied with single words as answers, especially with the particular word which is contained in the narrative itself, but always to *translate* it into one more familiar. After going over verses like these in detail, we should recommend varying the form of the question, thus:

"Now what have we learned in this verse?"

"That there was a traveler going from the chief city of Judea to another town near the Jordan, on the north-east."

"Well, and what happened to him?"

"He was robbed and half killed, and left very weak and helpless."

A teacher ought not, in fact, to be satisfied till he can get entire sentences for answers. These sentences will generally be paraphrases of the words used in the lesson, and the materials for making the paraphrases will have been developed in the course of the lesson by demanding, in succession, meanings and equivalents for all the principal words. It is worth while, now and then, to turn round pleasantly on some inattentive member of the class, or upon some one who has just given a mechanical answer, with the question, "What have we just said?" "Tell me what we have just learned about such a person?" Observe that the answer required to such a

question must necessarily be a whole sentence; it will be impossible to answer it without a real effort of thought and of judgment in the selection of the learner's words, and without an actual acquaintance with the fact that has been taught.

Third. Questions should be *definite* and *unmistakable*, and, for the most part, admit of but one answer. An unskillful teacher puts vague, wide questions, such as, "What did he do?" "What did Abraham say?" "How did Joseph feel at such a time?" "What lesson ought we to learn from this?" questions to which no doubt *he* sees the right answer, because it is already in his mind; but which, perhaps, admit of several equally good answers, according to the different points of view from which different minds would look at them.

Vague and indefinite questions always produce three different results, according to the class of children to whom they are addressed. The really thoughtful and sensible boy is simply bewildered by them. The bold and confident boy who does not think answers at random, and is thus strengthened in a habit of inaccuracy, and encouraged in the mischievous practice of guessing. There is a third class of children, not very keen, but sly and knowing nevertheless, who watch the teacher's peculiarities, know his methods, and soon acquire the knack of observing the structure of his sentences, so as to find out which answer he expects. They do not understand the subject so well, perhaps, as many others, but they understand the teacher better, and can more quickly pronounce the characteristic word, or the particular answer he expects. Now we do not hesitate to say, that as far as real education and development of thought are concerned, each of these three classes of children is injured by the habit of vague, wide, and ambiguous questioning which

is so common among teachers. Technical terms, and information children are not likely to possess, ought not to be demanded. Nor should questions be repeated to those who can not answer. A still more objectionable practice is that of suggesting the first word or two of a sentence, or pronouncing the first syllable of a word which the children do not recollect. All these errors generate a habit of guessing among the scholars, and we should ever bear in mind that there is no one habit more fatal to accurate thinking, or more likely to encourage shallowness and self-deception, than this.

There is a class of questions referred to in the section on the Bible class which hardly deserve the name, and which are, in fact, fictitious or apparent, but not true questions. We mean those which simply require the answer "Yes" or "No." Nineteen such questions out of twenty carry their own answers in them; for it is almost impossible to propose one without revealing, by the tone and inflexion of the voice, the kind of answer you expect. For example: "Is it right to honor our parents?" "Did Abraham show much faith when he offered up his son?" "Do you think the author of the Psalms was a good man?" "Were the Pharisees really lovers of truth?" Questions like these elicit no thought whatever; there are but two possible answers to each of them, and of these we are sure to show, by our manner of putting the question, which one we expect. Such questions should, therefore, as a general rule, be avoided, as they seldom serve any useful purpose, either in teaching or examining. For every question ought to require an effort to answer it; it may be an effort of memory, or an effort of imagination, or an effort of judgment, or an effort of perception; but it must be an effort; and a question which challenges no mental exertion whatever is worth nothing.

So much for the *language* of questioning. But it is worth while to give a passing notice to the order and *arrangement* which should always characterize a series of questions. They should, in fact, always follow one another in systematic order; each should seem to grow out of the answer which preceded it, and should have a clear logical connection with it.

We have often been struck, in reading the newspapers, to find what plain and sensible evidence the witnesses all appear to give at judicial trials. We recognize the name of some particular person, and we know, perhaps, that he is an uneducated man, apt to talk in an incoherent and desultory way on most subjects, utterly incapable of telling a simple story without wandering and blundering, and very nervous withal; yet if he happens to have been a witness at a trial, and we read the published report of his testimony, we are surprised to find what a connected, straightforward story it is; there is no irrelevant or needless matter introduced, and yet not one significant fact is omitted. We wonder how such a man could have stood up in a crowded court, and narrated facts with all this propriety and good taste. But the truth is, that the witness is not entitled to your praise. He never recited the narrative in the way implied by the newspaper report. But he stood opposite to a man who had studied the art of questioning, and he replied in succession to a series of interrogations which the barrister proposed to him. The reporter for the press has done no more than copy down, in the exact order in which they were given, all the replies to these questions; and if the sum of these replies reads to us like a consistent narrative, it is because the lawyer knew how to marshal his facts beforehand, had the skill to determine what was necessary, and what was not necessary, to the case in

hand, and to propose his questions so as to draw out, even from a confused and bewildered mind, a coherent statement of facts. We may take a hint, from the practice of the bar in this respect; and, especially in questioning by way of examination, we may remember that the answers of the children, if they could be taken down at the moment, ought to form a complete, orderly, and clear summary of the entire contents of the lesson.

Of course we do not mean to insist too rigidly on an adherence to this rule. Misconceptions will reveal themselves in the course of the lesson, which will require to be corrected; hard words will occur, which need explanation; new trains of thought and inquiry will seem to start out of the lesson, and to demand occasional digression; it will, in fact, often become necessary to deviate a little to the right hand or to the left from the main path, for the sake of illustration, and for other good reasons. Still, the main purpose of the whole lesson should be kept steadily in view; all needless digression should be carefully avoided, and any incidental difficulties which are unexpectedly disclosed in the lesson should rather be remembered and reserved for future investigation, than permitted to beguile a teacher into a neglect of those truths which the lesson is primarily designed to teach.

A good deal of the success of a teacher depends upon the *manner* in which questions are proposed. Perhaps the most important requisite under this head is *animation*. It is necessary to avoid long pauses, and all monotony of voice, or sluggishness of manner; to vary the phraseology of your questions, and to seek in every way to kindle interest and enthusiasm about the lesson. But in doing this let us remember that we can not give more than we possess; we can not raise the minds of others above the level of our own; and therefore it is important

that our manner should show a warm interest in the subject, and that our own love for sacred truth should be so strong as to convey itself, by the mere force of sympathy, into the hearts of those whom we undertake to instruct.

The whole sum of what may be said about questioning is comprised in this: It ought to set the learners to thinking, to promote activity and energy on their parts, and to arouse the whole mental faculty into action, instead of blindly cultivating the memory at the expense of the higher intellectual powers. That is the best questioning which best stimulates action on the part of the learner; which gives him a habit of thinking and inquiring for himself; which tends in a great measure to render him independent of his teacher; which makes him, in fact, rather a skillful finder than a patient receiver of truth. All our questioning should aim at this; and the success of our teaching must ever be measured, not by the amount of information we have imparted, but by the degree in which we have strengthened the judgment and enlarged the capacity of our pupils, and imparted to them that searching and inquiring spirit which is a far surer basis for all future acquisitions than any amount of mere information whatever.

THE ART OF SECURING ATTENTION.

YOU will *not* get attention by demanding it as a right, or by entreating it as a favor; by urging upon your pupils the importance of the subject, the sacredness of the day, the kindness of their teachers, or the great and solemn character of the truths you have to impart. Attention, such as alone can serve the purpose of a Sunday

school teacher, must always be founded on the facts that you have got something to say which is worth a child's hearing, and that you can say it in such a manner that he shall *feel* it to be worth his hearing.

The teacher's own mind must be *accurately* and *abundantly* prepared on the subject which he has to teach. He must have details—facts which he knows how to state with exactness; and a degree of nicety and precision about his knowledge far greater than he can ever hope to impart to the children. He should store his mind beforehand, not merely with what he means to impart, but with a great deal more. He does not know what topic may grow out of the lesson; he can not tell what questions the children may ask, nor what illustrations he may find most effective. So he should provide himself at all points. He should look *at* the lesson and *into* the lesson, and *all round* the lesson, before he gives it.

There is another reason for attaching great importance to *abundant* preparation. No man can ever teach all he knows on any subject. If you would be a good teacher, therefore, up to a certain point, you yourself should have gone far beyond that point. If any teacher just gets up a lesson from printed notes, and is only barely provided with the knowledge actually required for his class, he is sure to fail, both in securing attention and in getting the subject understood. Children will always carry away with them far less than you bring. Make up your mind at once to the fact, that a large discount or per centage of even a successful lesson is always lost in the very act of communicating it. Get all the subsidiary and illustrative information you can possibly accumulate about your lesson before you give it. Anecdotes, definitions of hard words, illustrations of Eastern life, verses of poetry, parallel texts and allusions, may or may not all be needed

in the lesson; but at any rate, they certainly *will* be needed by yourself.

Book knowledge is not the only knowledge, and it is certainly not all a Sunday school teacher wants. His preparation must be going on in the world as well as in his study. He must watch the incidents of every day, and see what use he can make of them in his class. The history of each day's experience, even of the humblest of us, illustrates some great moral and spiritual truth which underlies it, and is meant to be recognized and understood by us.

If there is any thing unfamiliar, or artificial, or sermonizing in your language or even in your tone; if your illustrations are bookish and unpractical; if the virtues and the vices you talk about are not the actual virtues which it is possible for them to practice, and the actual vices into which they are likely to fall; if in any way you shoot above their heads, or betray a want of familiarity with the real lives which children lead, your class, as an inevitable result, will cease to feel any interest in what you say.

Let me mention one or two merely mechanical devices for maintaining attention. Children need *change of posture*. The restlessness which we often complain of in children is not a fault; it is a constitutional necessity. It is positively painful to them to remain in one attitude long. Occasionally, as intimated in a previous page, when attention seems to flag, let the whole class stand for a short time, or go through some simple exercise which requires movement. When the body has had its lawful claims recognized, the mind will be more at leisure to devote itself to the lessons; the sense of weariness will disappear, and the work of teaching proceed with more cheerfulness.

What is called *simultaneous reading* may also prove a great help in maintaining the interest and attention, especially of a younger class. Of course it must not be practiced in a crowded school-room, when the noise would disturb other classes, unless you have tutored your class to read in a quiet and subdued tone. But if it can be adopted, the plan will occasionally relieve a lesson very much. It is always interesting to children to do something in concert; and if the teacher has a sharp eye and a quick ear, he can easily secure that every child shall be thoroughly wakeful and attentive. The exercise may often be well varied in this way. The teacher reads a passage slowly, and with correct tone and emphasis, alone: he then reads it a second time, the class joining with him, and reading in unison. He then asks them to be silent, and to keep their eyes fixed on the book while he reads, and to supply any word which he leaves out. Then he reads the passage, pausing frequently, and omitting a word to be supplied by the children. Lastly, he calls upon one and another separately to read the same passage. The plan of elliptical reading is one of the best we know to stimulate watchfulness and fixed attention on the part of the children. We have seen fifty little ones together, their eyes fixed intently on the book, all eager to pronounce the word omitted by the teacher at exactly the right moment.

Again, one of the greatest safeguards for the attention of the class is the cultivation on the teacher's part of *quickness of eye and ear*. It is surprising sometimes to see teachers addressing themselves to one part of their class, and apparently unconscious that another part is listless and uninterested. They seem incapable of taking in the whole class at one glance. Their eyes move slowly, and they either do not see the disorder and trifling which lurks in the corner of their class, or they do not care to

notice what it would give them some little trouble to remedy. A person of this kind will never keep up attention, nor prove a successful teacher, however well he may be provided with knowledge, and however anxious he may be to do good.

What every good teacher greatly needs is a quick eye and a comprehensive glance, which will take in the whole class at one view, or travel instantly from one part of it to the other. He should be able to detect the first rising of disorder, and the first symptom of weariness, in an instant, and to apply a remedy to it the next instant. It is from want of promptitude in noticing the little beginnings of inattention that our classes so often get disorderly and tired. We recommend every one who wants to be a good teacher, therefore, to cultivate in himself the habit of sharpness and watchfulness. He should so train himself that he shall become peculiarly sensitive about the little signs of inattention. It ought to make him uncomfortable to see one child's eye averted, or one proof, however small, that the thoughts of the class are straying from the subject. The surest way to increase inattention is to seem unconscious of it, or to allow it to pass unnoticed. Few things are so important as alacrity of movement; promptitude and readiness both in seeing and hearing; skill in finding out, at a moment's notice, who is the idlest boy in the class, and in giving him a question, or giving him a verse to read, before his mind becomes thoroughly alienated from the subject, and before the contagion of his example has had time to spread among the rest. A sluggish, heavy, inactive-looking teacher can never gain the sympathy of children, or keep up their attention long.

Closely allied to what we have called mechanical methods is the practice of *recapitulation*, by diligent and

thorough interrogation, not only at the end of the whole lesson, but also at the end of each separate division of it.

The best teachers are always those who, in addition to a knowledge of their subject, and the other qualifications which are necessary, possess also what may be called *pictorial power*. By this we mean the power of describing scenes and incidents so that they shall appear to a child's imagination as if they were really present to him. The imagination is a very active faculty in a child. It is developed far earlier, in the life of all of us, than the judgment and those reasoning powers which we are generally so anxious to cultivate. Now, how many of us are there who can tell a story well, or who can so describe a thing which we have seen that those who hear our description shall think they can almost see it too? Yet a man is never a perfect teacher till he can do this; and no appeals to the reason and the conscience, and the feelings of a child, will be so effective as they might be unless we can also appeal to his imagination. Need we remind you how constantly this is recognized in the Word of God; how continually the Bible writers, and especially the great Teacher himself, condescended to the weakness of man in this respect, and addressed their teachings not to the understanding directly, but indirectly, through the medium of the senses and the imagination? What else is the meaning of our Lord's parables? What else are those glowing Eastern metaphors, sparkling like rich gems over the whole surface of the Bible, but helps to the comprehension of great truths, optical instruments, so to speak, through which our dim eyes might behold doctrines and principles, and deep lessons, which otherwise they could not have perceived?

Consider, again, in regard to the lessons which lie hid in allegories and stories, that we often receive them far

more effectively into our minds for the very reason that they are indirect, and do not at first seem to apply to ourselves. If we obtrude our moral teaching too early, or if we begin by telling the children that we hope they will learn a useful lesson from what we are going to say, children fancy that we are preaching, and are perhaps indisposed to listen. But if we take care that the religious truth, or the rule of conduct, which we wish to enforce, seems spontaneously to grow out of the lesson, and keeps its place as an inference to be gathered from the story we are telling, it is far more likely to be efficacious. When Nathan was commissioned to reprove David, you know that if he had gone at once, and taxed him with the offense, and said, "You have committed a great sin, and I am come to rebuke you," David would probably have been prepared with some answer. But, instead of this, the prophet began to tell him a narrative: "There were two men in one city, the one rich, and the other poor." He went on further and further, detailing the various incidents of his story, till "David's anger was greatly kindled against the man," and he exclaimed, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." Not till the solemn words, "Thou art the man!" had been uttered in his hearing, did the conviction come thoroughly home to his heart that he was really guilty. Now, why was it that Nathan's method was so effective? Because David had listened with interest to the story without supposing that it concerned him. And we may see the same thing illustrated in our Lord's parables constantly, that they not only chain the attention of the listener by their pictorial character, but they set him thinking for himself, and drawing inferences about truths of the highest value almost without being aware of it. The most effective lessons which enter the human

heart are not those which take the form of lessons. It is when we are least conscious of the process by which we are impressed that we are impressed most deeply. And it is for this reason, if for no other, that the indirect teaching which is wrapped up in stories and metaphors often secures more attention than teaching of a more direct and didactic kind.

Suppose we endeavor to remember carefully things which we have seen, and to describe them afterward. Suppose we practice ourselves a little more than we do in the art of telling a story. Suppose, when we have read of a circumstance, or met with one which has interested us, we sit down and try to reproduce it in our own language in writing. Suppose we watch carefully the sort of illustration and metaphor which excites our own attention, and then carefully husband it in our memories, with a view to making use of it in our classes. Suppose, when we are going to give a lesson on some Bible narrative, we study all its details and all its surrounding circumstances so well, that we can almost realize the picture of it to ourselves. Suppose, in short, we always keep in view the necessity of rendering our teaching more vivid, and are always on the watch for material by which it may be made more so; I believe that we shall make a step in the right direction at least. Any man whose heart is in his work may do all this, and may become a very interesting teacher without being a poet, and without possessing any peculiar natural gifts. If you go to the seaside, and hear the rolling of the waves, or if you stand on a hill in view of some fair landscape, which the Summer sun lights up with unusual glory, try to retain your impressions, and see how far you are able to convey the picture of the scene to others. If you want to give a lesson on St. Paul's preaching at Athens, try to find out

what it was that the apostle could see as he stood on Mars Hill, with the temples of Minerva and of Theseus near him; with an eager inquisitive crowd thronging round his feet; with the altar, and its mysterious inscription, "To the unknown God," just in sight; and with the blue waters of the Piræus spreading out beyond. And if you will do this; and if, meanwhile, you take care that your love of illustration never betrays you into levity or trifling; that you never tell stories for the sake of telling stories, but always for the sake of some valuable lesson which the story illustrates, there can be no doubt that, by God's blessing, you will become possessed, not only of one of the best instruments for keeping up the attention of little children, but also of a key which will unlock their heart.

Do not get into a *stereotyped routine method* of giving lessons. You will often, at conventions, hear a good model lesson; you will admire its style and its method; you will think it, perhaps, the best lesson you ever heard. But do not suppose that is a reason for imitating its method precisely next Sunday, and for casting all your lessons into the same mold. Different subjects admit of and require great diversity of treatment.

Attention is an *act of the will*. We *can* all be attentive, or at least more attentive than we are, if we wish to be so. The degree of attention we pay, therefore, depends on our own disposition to attend. This shows us that the matter, after all, is very largely one of *discipline*, and that, all other things being equal, that teacher will win most attention who has most personal influence, and who is looked up to with the greatest respect. Is there any one of you whom the children are accustomed to treat with disrespect? Do any of you find your commands disobeyed, and your look of anger disregarded? Ask yourself whether your own behavior is uniform and

dignified; whether you ever give commands without seeing that they are obeyed; whether you waste your words or your influence in an injudicious way; whether there is any thing in your conduct that reveals to the children a want of punctuality, or of earnestness, or of steadiness on your part. There can be no thorough attention unless you accustom yourself to have perfect order, and therefore every step you can take to secure better discipline, and to gain more influence over the minds of the children, will indirectly tell upon the degree of attention you will obtain in teaching.

Nor forget that *attention is a habit*, and subject to the same laws which regulate all other habits. Every time we listen languidly to an address, or read a book carelessly, the habit of inattention becomes strengthened, and it becomes less and less possible for us ever to become clear thinkers or steady reasoners. If a boy is allowed to be unpunctual, to miscall words without being compelled to go back and correct himself, to read how he likes, to answer when he likes, to sit down when he is told to stand, to repeat tasks inaccurately, and to give a half-hearted attention to the minor rules of the school, of course, he will give half-hearted attention to the teaching. It would be wonderful if he did not.

Try to feel with the children, to understand their natures, and to discern what is going on in their minds. Do not half the faults of our teaching arise from a want of thorough acquaintance with the little ones, and a want of true insight into their mental and moral nature? Does not this lie at the root of much of the inattention of which we complain? The truth is, that a good teacher ought not only to possess that sympathy which makes him feel *for* a child, and love him, and try to do him good; but the sympathy which feels *with* him, which makes due

allowance for his imperfectly developed nature, and which thoroughly comprehends his character and wants. He is always the wisest teacher who can combine the man's intellect and the child's heart; who contrives to keep fresh in his memory the knowledge of what he once was, and what a child's wants, and a child's likes and dislikes, and a child's infirmities really are. A really earnest and loving Christian teacher will be very careful not to set up a man's standard to measure a child by; he will always ask himself, when preparing or giving a lesson, not, "What will it seem proper for me to say?" but, "What is the thing best adapted for these children to hear?" He will cultivate an intimate acquaintance with childhood, and all its little whims and follies. He will ask God daily to enlarge his own heart, and to make him sympathize with every form of childish weakness, except sin; and he will lay to heart the secret meaning of the solemn warning which our Savior addressed to his disciples: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." I think that such a teacher will not want any one to give him rules for sustaining the interest of his class, because he will have got hold of the principle which will enable him to devise rules for himself. Such a teacher will be sure to win attention, and when he has won it will be likely to keep it.

SUPPLY OF TEACHERS.

IF possible, acquaint yourself with every member of the Church your school is connected with. Make up a list of such members not connected with the school as you think are in any way qualified to teach. Take

that list into your closet and lay the matter before God, seeking wisdom of him that is able to impart it. Follow this up with a personal visit to the homes of such as you feel anxious to enlist in the school as teachers. Lay the true condition of the school before them; invite them to take part in such positions as they will feel most at home in; impress the importance of the work upon them and your anxiety to secure their services, and you may be assured—if they are not hard-hearted Christians and yourself not too repulsive in your manners—they *can* be interested. Personal appeals will surmount many an obstacle.

Never ask your pastor to give a scolding or a lecture to the Church because they fail to do this duty in the Sunday school. It will do no good. A personal visit and a friendly talk over the matter will win ninety-nine cases out of a hundred.

Make allowances for home circumstances. Many a Christian man or woman is prevented from engaging in Sunday school work from domestic cares.

The prayer meetings of the Church give the superintendent a fine chance to call in assistants. The faithful, working ones of the Church are generally found at such meetings. It is a good time and place to search for workers. Seek them out and pledge them on the spot.

When new members are being admitted or received into the Church, secure from them an early committal, and if competent, give them an early opportunity of enrolling themselves as teachers of your school.

It is often the case, that mission schools are better favored with teachers than the home or Church school. The enthusiasm of mission work often carries to distant fields those who have no life or interest in any other kind of schools. But what is the right method to adopt to secure a faithful corps of teachers for such enterprises? If

it can be avoided, never import your stock of teachers; let the field on which you labor supply them.

Keep your mission Sunday school under the control of some one Church; let the world know at the outset what your colors are; give preference, always, to the members of your own Church or denomination in selecting your teachers, but throw your doors wide open and invite any Christian, worthy of the position, to come and help you, if he has no opportunity of laboring for the Church of his own denomination.

Keep an eye upon good moral persons in your congregation or in the community about you. If they have any gift for teaching, and are willing to do so, give them such classes as would be suited to them. Give preference always to the earnest Christian; but if these are not available, you will be compelled to take the best you can find among the unconverted.

Exhaust every effort to secure Christians before introducing an element that is in reality of doubtful expediency.

Have the members of your advanced classes, or adult classes, constantly reminded that they should some day become teachers in your school, and ought to be preparing for the work of teaching. The teachers of such classes should keep the idea constantly before their scholars, so that when the superintendent needs help, he can call upon such classes to fill vacancies.

William H. Groser, one of the most successful of English Sunday school workers, recommends the formation of what he calls the introductory, or initiatory class. To this class all are admitted who are willing to engage in future teaching. It can be commenced with the fewest possible number of members, but there must be an agreement to remain in it a definite period, say three or six months. The class is also open to such as have had

difficulties or embarrassments in teaching, and who desire to be instructed more thoroughly in its performance:

Let the teacher be the best man that can be obtained; if he have the experience of the day school, so much the better. But whether with or without this experience, he should familiarize himself with the best works on Sabbath school teaching and training.

The first portion of the exercises of this initiatory class may consist in the study of the appointed portion of Scripture, either that allotted to the day, or to the following Sunday. So far the proceedings of the class would resemble those of an ordinary preparation class. On the first or second Sunday of the month the method of imparting the lesson to an infant class might be kept in view, on the third the method of imparting it to the intermediate class, and on the fourth that of communicating it to the Bible class. Occasionally, half a dozen scholars, say from the intermediate section, might, in the absence of their teacher, be brought into the class, and the lesson for the day be briefly taught to them by the teacher, after which they would retire to the general school, and the morning or afternoon's session would close by a conversation on what had just taken place.

After a while the members of the class would be able to prepare outlines or sketches of lessons, and present them in a written form. Subsequently the more advanced members would be able to give actual lessons to scholars in the manner described, the teacher offering his friendly counsels and criticisms after the dismissal of the children.

Mr. Groser's plan has been tried on a pretty extensive scale, and has been, in many localities, a success.

TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

TEACHERS' meetings *can* be conducted successfully, and in many places are; but they will not bear a stereotyped or inflexible mode. Consider first the advantages of such meetings:

1. They promote acquaintanceship among the teachers, and fellowship and sympathy for each other in their work.
2. They give the superintendent opportunity to make known his plans, interest the teachers therein, and counsel and direct them in their labors, and thus unite the whole school into one manageable, working body.
3. They give opportunity for the consideration of measures, and the transaction of necessary business.
4. They give opportunity for that thorough and uniform preparation of the lesson that teachers who bear the burden of souls always desire.
5. They give teachers opportunity for the culture of the heart and united prayer.

Consider, next, how teachers' meetings can best be made to secure these ends:

1. They should be held weekly, and at such time and place that the greatest possible number can attend.
2. They should be regarded by the superintendent and teachers as part of the regular and necessary work of the school.
3. They should be attended by all the teachers, and those absent without cause should be regarded as neglecting their trust equally with those absenting themselves from the class on Sunday.
4. They should be earnestly prepared for by the superintendent and teachers, and engaged in with zeal and spirit.

Can such meetings be held in the country? They can. Let the teachers meet before the Church service in the morning of the Sabbath, or let them meet after the school is dismissed and the scholars are gone, or it may be associated with the regular Church prayer meeting. Let the minister, as Mr. Vincent recommends, deliver a brief, exegetical, and practical lecture on the Sabbath school lesson for the coming Sabbath. Then let the usual time, thirty, forty, or fifty minutes, be spent in prayer. After the prayer meeting the superintendent can convene the teachers for the transaction of Sunday school business.

We subjoin the views and methods of various persons who have had more or less experience in conducting such meetings.

Rev. H. C. M'Cook, of St. Louis, says: At one time there should be an earnest, thorough examination of the lesson for the next Sabbath. One teacher has a thought on this text, another on that; one brings an illustration from the field, another from the shop, another from the school, another has an incident he has gathered from some book or paper, etc. Again, reports are made of the condition of the classes. One tells his difficulties, his peculiar ways of managing this class of mind and that, and thus the actual experience of earnest men and women in the work is brought out for the instruction and benefit of all. Then there should be discussions or remarks on general subjects of Sabbath school interest. By these and other methods variety and value will be imparted to these meetings, and an interest that will attract and retain the teachers. As to who should conduct the meeting, the superintendent ought, in most cases, to do it, but often the pastor, and sometimes both pastor and superintendent together. One fact must always be borne in mind, that no one can carry on the work of teachers' meetings, or

any other work connected with the Sabbath school, without study and toil. It is hard work.

R. G. Pardee, Esq., of New York, thus states his views: The teachers are to help each other on the points where they most see and feel their needs and deficiencies. If, in coming together, the teachers are not well acquainted with each other, let the superintendent inquire, familiarly and pleasantly, of each teacher, in a few words, How many scholars in the class? are their scholars regular, punctual, orderly, and attentive? If not, then the teachers and conductor will gently add a suggestion or two, to relieve the difficulties. Then, after a social recess of fifteen minutes, ask for the best or most impressive thoughts of the lesson, all mingled with singing and prayers.

At the next meeting, in a similar manner, ask for difficulties in the class, and how to remove them. After that, call for illustrations of the lesson.

Again, at another meeting, ask, Have you visited your scholars? and draw out the incidents, and when you reach the lesson, let the teachers each give their plan of laying out the lesson and teaching it.

Another week, inquire, Is there any special religious interest in the class? and then, How would you apply the lesson? etc.

In some such way, avoiding routine and dull formality, but by fresh adaptation of fresh thoughts, meet the real needs of the teachers, and then none of them can afford to be absent.

In a country school district Sabbath school, let the teachers set apart Thursday evening of each week to this purpose and the social privilege. Let the farmers leave their work, as a custom, one hour earlier, on that evening, and meet alternately in the different teachers' homes. Provide attendants for the young lady teachers. Suppose

the superintendent resides one mile north of the center and two or three other teachers live a half a mile east and west. But there are two young lady teachers one mile south—how can they get to the meeting? The superintendent remembers that in the next house to where the young ladies reside is the only son of Esquire Jones, fifteen years of age. He has just broken away from the Sabbath school, and inclines toward fast horses and gilded saloons. The superintendent wants to reach him; he yearns to save him; he thinks and prays over the subject till he really loves him. He then visits the young man, approaches him, and treats him with unusual respect. After a little pleasant talk, he tells him that he has come to ask of him a favor. It is this, in our flourishing little Sabbath school we want a librarian. Can you favor us by accepting the office? An affirmative answer is given, and then the superintendent says, Charles, we teachers hold delightful teachers' meetings on every Thursday evening, and as you have a fine horse and buggy, can 't you make it convenient to bring the Miss Smiths? Why, of course. It is just what Charlie wants, and what the superintendent wants, and thus "two birds are killed with one stone." In some such way, with a little tact, ingenuity, and with a good, honest, sincere heart, and sympathy in the work, methinks every obstacle can be readily overcome, and teachers' meetings can be sustained in ordinary hands, and made abundantly useful, and prove to be one of the greatest social and religious blessings.

Mr. Ralph Wells thinks the teachers' meeting should ordinarily be conducted by the superintendent. Let the meeting be opened with singing a hymn, and a short prayer. Then let each teacher produce his thoughts on the lesson, his illustrations, and suggestions.

Suppose the lesson to be the first few verses of the

third chapter of John. The question first asked might be, "Can any one give the meaning of the word Nicodemus?" Another question, "Will some one give us the character, in a word, of this man?" "What was the object of his coming by night?" Quite a difference of opinion will be expressed on this point, but let no discussion be allowed; take simply each one's view, and then pass on. "Do we ever read of this Nicodemus after?" Then the three times in which we read of him are given with the passages, showing the progression in the mind of Nicodemus. Second verse: "Why was he afraid?" "Give us a description of how he appeared." "How did Jesus receive this proud-spirited man?" Dwell upon this. Then take the third verse, for here comes in the point of the lesson, "Ye must be born again." One teacher may say, "It is a change of motive, of desire, of liking." This verse shows man's natural heart to be totally wicked. Then some passages may be given to prove this: "The heart is deceitful above all things," etc. Then, "Can any teacher here give us a Bible example of this being born again?" The case of Paul may be stated, and these points made: What Paul was, what Paul became, and how that change was effected. 1. Dwell upon Paul's former character, interests, and prospects. 2. What Paul did—he began to pray; he began to tell others about Christ. 3. How his conversion was effected: Jesus spoke and Paul listened. The evidences of the possession of this new heart may be the last point made. Give Bible texts: 1 John v, 1, "Faith in Jesus Christ;" v, 2, "Brotherly love;" v, 4, "Overcoming the world;" ii, 29, "A holy life"—the outward evidences of the inward change. Then let each teacher give his illustrations on these points.

Says Rev. I. W. Wiley, D. D., of Cincinnati: I think every Sabbath school will find a necessity for organizing

a teachers' meeting. How to teach a Bible class can only be learned by teachers gathering together in the capacity of teachers' Bible classes. I would assign a topic to be prepared by the teachers for the following Sabbath. Every teacher should be well prepared on that lesson or chapter. The relation of a Sunday school teacher implies it; they must be ready to impart all they know about it on the following Sabbath. I will mention three methods I have experimented on myself. The first was this. The Sunday school being held in the morning, on Sunday afternoon we held the teachers' meeting. There the lesson for the school next Sunday would be examined. All the teachers would go over the lesson and talk about it, asking questions, and having a free interchange of views. After half an hour thus spent, I would come before the class and deliver what you might dignify with the name of a lecture on the lesson. I would know beforehand what the lesson was to be, and would be prepared to explain it to them. They would be ready with a great many questions, and I would answer them as far as possible. I pursued this course for two years with considerable satisfaction to myself and benefit to the teachers. Removing to another locality, I thought I would try a second method, and that was the catechetical method. I would state the lesson beforehand to the school, and on Friday evening I would meet the teachers and ask questions. In this I met with a difficulty, namely, that those who most of all ought to come staid away, not simply because they did not want to answer questions, but because they were not able to answer them. I did not find this plan to work satisfactorily to myself or the school.

I then tried a mixed method. I would come before the class as a moderator, and would have something like a free conversation. I felt it to be my duty as a teacher

to post myself well in every thing connected with the lesson, and then throw the subject before the teachers for their discussion. I found this method worked admirably. The teachers would start questions, and become interested in some topic, and give it a pretty thorough examination. One great desideratum is variety. I think I would adopt all methods, by turns. I find it necessary in either of these plans, that there should be variety. The mind wearies with sameness.

The main point is, that we comprehend the importance of having meetings of this kind. Let there be selected the most competent mind, the most versatile, ready to devise, plan, and execute—a good teacher in the Sabbath school; and then by some such course as indicated, by the lecture, the catechetical, or the mixed plan, that from time to time seems wisest, you will have such meetings as will tend greatly to improve your schools—meetings that will tend to the development of a true and saving knowledge of the Scriptures.

The Sunday school connected with Rev. Thomas K. Beecher's Church, Elmira, N. Y., is one of the largest and most prosperous in the country. The teachers' meetings in this school adhere to a uniform programme. At the present time, the school is just closing its fourth year, "and," says the pastor, "with new and absorbing interest."

The skeleton of the teachers' meeting held by the school is this:

1. Roll-call at an exact hour.
2. Prayer.
3. Recitation of lesson memoriter, the class being paired off, that all may recite. Sometimes a unison recitation additional.
4. Mark results of recitation in roll-book, and note the tardy ones.

5. Drill by the instructor, as if the teachers were one large Sunday school class.

a. No books allowed.

b. Questions asked and answered "eye to eye."

c. *Three grades of questions*—suited to three grades of classes in Sunday school.

Grade 1. Questions so put that they can be answered in the language of the lesson, without any other help or knowledge.

Grade 2. Questions—to answer which more or less of intelligent reasoning or research is needed. *Much instruction here.*

Grade 3. Questions which involve the spiritual or religious doctrine and application.

6. Questions or unremoved difficulties are then propounded by the class, till expiration of the hour.

Hymns, as well as Scriptural lessons, are memorized by the teachers and recited at their meeting. Whatever is required of Sunday school pupils is first required and performed by the Sunday school teachers.

"*The whole art,*" says Mr. Beecher, "*of teaching, is in the trained faculty of questioning.*"



OPENING AND CLOSING EXERCISES.

NO programme of fixed opening and closing exercises should be adopted and followed Sabbath after Sabbath. Some schools uniformly have the same person to offer the opening prayer. It matters little whether it be the pastor, the superintendent, or a teacher, the practice becomes both monotonous and wearisome. The superintendent ought to offer prayer more frequently than any

other person, but even he, however excellent his spirit or appropriate his words, should avail himself of the help of his pastor and fellow-workers. The prayer should always have reference to the present condition of the school, and the lesson of the day. We subjoin the orders of several schools in different parts of the country:

1. The school opens at nine; prayer meeting for scholars and teachers fifteen minutes before opening; singing; prayer, followed by the Lord's prayer in concert; singing again; lesson, forty minutes; new scholars introduced; review of the lesson by superintendent; singing; a word or two of general talk, notices, distribution of papers, dismissals—girls going out first one Sabbath, boys first the following.

2. Scriptures read, generally by the superintendent, seldom by scholars and superintendent in alternation; singing of two hymns; prayer, in simple language, and having reference to the special state of the school, all the children uniting in concert; singing of two to four hymns, with remarks interspersed by chorister or superintendent, the girls occasionally singing a verse by themselves, and the boys afterward by themselves; lesson, thirty to thirty-five minutes in length; five minutes' review of the intermediate classes by superintendent; singing of one or two hymns bearing on the lesson. Every first Sunday in the month is missionary Sunday, on which day two or three speakers, previously notified, and therefore prepared, speak on some special missionary topic; one-third of the time also given to singing; collection from the classes individually, the amount so raised stated, and also, afterward, the general aggregate; dismiss the boys by classes, the girls en masse.

3. Teachers' prayer meeting quarter to nine o'clock; at precisely nine the bell is struck and the door locked;

the singing-books have previously been distributed, five in each seat, by the teachers; singing of one hymn, and door unlocked so as to admit those who had gathered during the singing; door locked again; a Psalm or short chapter read, the superintendent taking the first verse, and the teachers and scholars the second, and so alternately; prayer, closed with the Lord's prayer, all uniting in concert; door opened again, and scholars who have gathered take their places; second hymn, and at the tap of the bell the librarians go among the classes and gather the books brought in from the last Sabbath, after which the lesson begins; the opening exercises take about twenty minutes, lesson fifty, during which time the teachers are not allowed to be interfered with except from the most urgent necessity; at ten minutes past ten librarians go for the books; after this the closing hymn.

WILLIAM REYNOLDS, of Peoria, Ill., is superintendent of a mission school of five hundred scholars. The following is an outline of his method of opening and closing:

The time for opening is quarter-past two o'clock. I go to the school-room at half-past one to see that every thing is in order, books distributed, etc., and to write the central thought of the lesson on the blackboard. Every thing is made to bear upon this thought. For nearly thirty minutes, till the time for opening school, such of the scholars as have gathered are exercised in singing. When quarter-past two arrives—we have a clock in our school—I tap my bell for order. I do not speak. I simply stand, and stand silent till order is secured. I never say, "Mr. Brown's class is out of order," or, "Miss Jones, you might have less confusion there;" never! A glance of the eye will do more than a word. It is silent itself, and makes no noise. Here is its great power. Order being

secured, the school is asked to turn to such and such a chapter. As superintendent, I read one verse, the school the next, and so on for fifteen to twenty verses. A hymn is then given out, and read with earnest emphasis. I have never entered my desk as superintendent without having every part of my duty prepared. I know just what I am going to do, and the order of doing it. My chapter is selected, and read, and prayed over; my hymn has also been read over, sometimes *twenty* times, before I felt that I had entered into the spirit of it, and was prepared to read it before my school. A superintendent has just as much need of preparation in coming before his school as a pastor in coming into his pulpit. The school then sing. That over, they fold their hands and close their eyes, and the superintendent, or some teacher who has been spoken to beforehand, leads in a short prayer, never over a minute and a half long, and such as the children can engage in and make their own. The prayer over, they take their seats, turn to the lesson, and read it over in concert. Thirty-five minutes are then given to the teachers, who are sacredly guarded against any interruptions during this time. When thirty minutes are up I tap the bell slightly, as a signal that only five minutes more remain to the teacher in which to close his lesson. It is not well to shut down at once upon teachers, who may be in the midst of a solemn remark, clinching the instructions of the whole half hour. It is best to allow them a few moments for closing. At the second tap of the bell the teachers are expected to come to perfect silence at once, all books are closed, a hymn is given out, the school rise and sing it, the secretary's report of attendance that day is read, and also the missionary collection of the day, which is taken up during the singing of the hymn just noted. Necessary notices are then given

out clearly and distinctly, and if a stranger is present who can talk upon the subject of the lesson, he is sometimes invited to do so; very rarely is he asked if he can not speak upon the subject which is upon all minds and hearts—the subject of the lesson. If no one is present to speak, the superintendent says a few words, reviewing the lesson, perhaps, and putting the points on the black-board. After this another hymn is sung, and while the school is standing a brief prayer is offered for a blessing upon the exercises of the hour, closing always with the Lord's prayer, which is repeated by the school in concert. As soon as the amen is spoken the school is seated, and dismissal begins. This is not done in a pell-mell, helter-skelter style, but quietly and in order. The officers of the school are all in their places. The organist commences a familiar tune. Several of the scholars, who have taken their stand at the instrument, sing with it. Class No. 1 rises at the tap of the bell, files past the superintendent's desk, who recognizes each scholar, and often takes each one by the hand, and then class No. 2, and so on, till one side is dismissed, when the other side is done in like manner, the children singing in the mean while. It takes five or six minutes to dismiss the whole school by this process. The teachers are still sitting at their posts. They are now gathered into a group, and spend fifteen minutes in prayer over their work. One hour and a half, in all, is the length of the school session.

Another superintendent thus briefly indicates his plan:

I am at the school-room ten minutes before the hour of opening, my aim being to have a word with each scholar and teacher. The practice has a tendency to make the children come early, and their promptness serves to hurry up dilatory teachers. Our school is in session one hour

and ten minutes : twenty of this is spent in singing, twenty-five with the classes, and the remaining twenty-five in concert prayer, reviewing the lesson, taking the record, etc. I make it a point to visit each class, noticing the different methods of teaching, correcting defects, commending excellencies, and offering such aid as I feel capable of giving.

A third superintendent describes his room and method in this way:

Suppose the superintendent's platform, situated on the side and about the middle of the length of the building or school-room. This will enable him very naturally to make of the school two divisions. These two divisions may chant separately or in unison, according as he indicates by one or both hands—those on the left taking part only when the left hand is raised, those on the right following the motions of the right hand, and all joining in when both hands are up, and ceasing the instant that they fall. By this mode of regulating this exercise, some wonderful effects are easily produced, and that too without the aid of the voice of the superintendent.

At the raising of the right hand the east division will commence to chant slowly and impressively; for instance, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Suddenly they cease, the hand having fallen; but after a short pause, as the other hand is lifted up, the other division takes up the second verse, suddenly ceasing again at a like signal; and then, as both hands are raised, the whole school joins in the beautiful psalm. To shut one's eyes and listen, the interruption and change from one part of the house to another, makes the whole appear as if it were involuntarily begun by one, taken up by another, and then, as the Spirit moves, irrepressibly carried on by all.

Children seem to like chanting better than singing.

This style of music is not so boisterous, is a great deal more sweet, and is a great deal more easily learned.

W. A. BELL, principal of the Indianapolis High School, remarks:

I once tried the experiment of having the scholars read alternate verses with me, as is customary in some Sunday schools; I soon gave it up, and am satisfied that it is *not* a good plan. I think that Sunday school superintendents generally make a mistake in this respect. I judge from personal experience. When I read only each alternate verse, I do not get the full sense of what I read, for while the intervening verses are being read, I am looking ahead to see what I have to read next.

Some superintendents read only a part of a verse, or, it may be, but part of a sentence, allowing the scholars to finish it. This method is preferable to the former, as it obviates, to a great degree, the objection mentioned above. The Sermon on the Mount, and some of the Psalms, are beautiful read in this way.

Still another method is, for the superintendent to read only so much at a time as can be remembered, and have the school repeat it after him. This method is preferable to either of the others in ungraded or primary schools, as all can join in it. In the two former, those who can not read at all, and those who can not read readily, are wholly excluded from the exercise.

My conclusion, then, is, that *generally* the superintendent himself should do the reading. When the pupils read, most of them necessarily give their *chief* attention to the *reading*. When the teacher reads they can attend wholly to the *thought*.

The prayer following the reading is always short, seldom, if ever, reaching three minutes in length. It is

always made to refer to the lesson read, and, if possible, to further impress its teaching.

It is a beautiful and appropriate exercise to have the school, in concert, repeat the Lord's Prayer, or one of the Psalms. If the superintendent prefers it, this may take the place of an original prayer, or be added to it.

B. F. JACOBS, a distinguished and successful Sunday school Baptist worker, of Chicago, says:

Enter your school-room orderly and quickly; put your hat, coat, overshoes, etc., away in place and out of sight—no matter how cold, do not keep any of them on. Move about the school-room with as little noise as possible. Look at the different parts of the room to see if all is in order, if the room has the right temperature, and see that a supply of pure air is provided, that the fires are in order, etc. Arrange your desk so as to look tidily and as tastefully as possible. Put on the blackboard the central thought of the lesson, and at the minute for opening strike the bell. A time-table should be arranged, that each exercise may have its exact place and share of the hour or session. Our own, sometimes varied, is as follows:

Meet at half-past nine; singing, fifteen minutes; reading lesson in concert or alternately, five minutes; prayer, three minutes; report of previous Sabbath, two minutes; lesson, thirty minutes.

Superintendent—Review of lesson, blackboard, or object lesson, or remarks, ten minutes; singing, fifteen minutes; distribution books, five minutes; Lord's Prayer.

We use two bells; the larger one is struck for order at half-past nine. At a quarter to ten the smaller one is struck for the doors to be closed for the Scripture and prayer.

At the close of the report or opening exercises, see

that every class is provided with a teacher; then that every new scholar has his or her name registered, and is placed in a class. Speak to every stranger, inviting all to come again, and also to join the school. During the time occupied by the lessons, watch your classes and try and judge what each one may need. As often as possible visit your infant department; say a few kind words, or review a lesson, or ask them to sing for you. At the close of the lessons, in giving a blackboard or object lesson, or in addressing the school, let every one feel that you are interested and earnest in what you do or say. If you invite any one to address the school, give them your time, and only ask them to take it when you are quite sure they can do more good than you can. In giving your notices, let them be stated so that all can hear every word. If you close the school with the Lord's Prayer, have all rise, and wait for silence before you commence, and let its recital be a prayer.

Whenever you strike your bell for order, wait till it is still. Do not become noisy yourself trying to get others still. The best way is to fold your arms, and wait in silence, looking around and upon any person or class that is disorderly, till, catching your look, they become quiet.

THE UNIFORM LESSON.

WHEN the Bible class, the intermediate classes, and the infant class all have the same lesson, the school is said to be studying a uniform lesson. Sometimes, when only the intermediate classes, or those sitting in the same room, are engaged in the exercise, the school is also pronounced studying a uniform lesson.

Two things are absolutely necessary to such a lesson: first, study, regular, careful, and thorough, on the part of the superintendent and all the teachers; second, an examination and review of all the school by the pastor, superintendent, or some one of the more experienced teachers. This review, if attended to weekly, need not occupy over five or ten minutes, or, if monthly, half an hour. Some superintendents have the weekly ten-minute reviews, together with a monthly and quarterly review. Whoever conducts such examinations must not only understand the lesson, but must have tact enough to engage every child in the school in answering. Some superintendents look for bright replies, and hence only the bright scholars are heard. The true philosophy consists in bringing out the backward, as well as other scholars.

The multiplicity, as well as the defective character of many of the question-books, operates against the uniform lesson. Some of these books have been prepared by persons having had but little experience in the school-room, others by persons having had teaching experience, but lacking in a knowledge of the truest methods of instruction.

"We have tried the uniform lesson twice in our school," said a Boston superintendent once to us, "and each time have failed." "How long did you try?" "About a month each time." "Did you use a schedule of the lessons, or a question-book?" "Once we had a schedule of subjects; at another time we had question-books—three different kinds, I believe." *Such* an inauguration of the system could result in scarcely any thing except failure.

Suppose the lesson to be the ten verses of Matthew vi, 25-34, beginning, "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life," etc. Let the teacher of the infant class read the lesson slowly over, the children repeating

the words in concert after him. Let the members of the Bible and intermediate classes recite to their teachers as many of the verses of the lesson as possible. As this lesson is not long, the majority of the scholars, if they have studied the lesson, can say all. At all events, let all the scholars in all the classes, together with all the teachers and the superintendent, commit the thirty-third verse, which may be called the golden text: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It will be observed that, so far as the infant class is concerned, the lesson will be an object one. Birds, feathers, and flowers would, at the proper stage in the lesson, be appropriate. Some would even say that a cage of canary birds might be introduced, and the details of how they are fed, developed, etc. A transition might then be effected, asking, Who feeds the wild birds? How does God feed them? Does he carry the food and drop it into their nests, or do the birds, guided by the wisdom of the Lord, find it themselves? Bring out all that the children know of the habits of the birds. What sort of birds were these that Jesus was speaking of? *Ravens*. What sort of a bird is a raven? *Something like a crow—black*. One time Mr. Lincoln was walking, in the Summer-time, with a friend. He heard a faint noise coming from a bush. He stopped and listened again. He was sure he heard a voice. He went up, and, putting his hand on the bush, opened its top and looked down, and saw a small birds'-nest in it; but the nest was empty, and half turned over. Mr. Lincoln looked down again and saw three little birds, two on the ground, and one hanging by his left leg on part of the bush, his head turned downward, and his mouth wide open. They had no feathers on their backs, only a little soft down, soft as the softest cotton or silk. "Come on, come on!"

cried Mr. Lincoln's companion. But Mr. Lincoln did not feel like going on till he had straightened the nest and put the wee birds back in their home. It was God that made Mr. Lincoln's heart so kind, and God, through Mr. Lincoln, took care of the little birds when they could not take care of themselves.

The second part of the lesson could be introduced by bringing in a flower, or bunch of flowers, carefully concealed from the class till the proper time comes.

Make a practical application by the inquiry, If God takes care of the birds and flowers, and feeds them and makes them grow, will he not take care of us, if we trust him? A boy once lost his father, then his mother, and at last was left quite alone in the world; but God did not forget him nor let him want.

As a closing exercise, require all the scholars to repeat again the thirty-third verse.

In giving the lesson to an intermediate class require the central thought of the lesson. In this case it seems to be—*We are not to be anxious, but trustful.* Against improper anxiety Christ presents six considerations: 1. That the life is more than food—there is a soul in man, and it is of the utmost importance that the wants of the spiritual nature should be cared for; 2. That the birds do not want for food; 3. That our anxiety can not make us grow taller, nor live longer: we must do our part of the work and leave the result with God; 4. That the lilies were better clothed than Solomon was; 5. That our Heavenly Father knows our wants, and if we do his will he will supply them; 6. That we should not increase the cares of this day by borrowing care from the future. The analytical questions might be somewhat as follows:

1. What is the first argument against worldly careflessness? Are food and clothing the principal objects for

which we are made? What should we live for? What do men seem most concerned about in this life?

2. What does Christ say of the work of the birds? Does he mean that we should not work? Is a man worth more than a bird?

3. Can you make yourself taller by anxiety about it? Who regulates our height? Ought we not to leave other things that are beyond our control to God's care and wisdom?

4. Who clothes the lilies? What is said of their working? Does he mean that we must not work?

5. Ought it not to be a comfort to us that our Heavenly Father knows what we need? What should we seek first? What is meant by "the kingdom of God?" What is meant by "His righteousness?" What shall be added to us?

6. What is meant by the morrow taking care of itself? Does each day bring trouble enough of itself?

Practical Questions.—What does this lesson teach? Are *you* seeking the kingdom of God? Are you seeking *first* the righteousness or forgiveness that comes by faith? Are you anxious about the world, or do you trust God for the future?

Follow a similar analysis with the Bible class; but dwell more on the ethical or doctrinal peculiarities of the lesson. Thus:

Christ here condescends to do what was not his custom, as a teacher; he gives a reason for his injunctions. Generally, he spoke "as one having authority;" but here he deigns to enforce his commands by arguments. He states that man's existence is superior to all the secular blessings he requires. The interrogation, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment," is an emphatic expression of the affirmative, that man can

inquire into the history of the Creation, he can rise in thought to his Maker, and hold communion with him, and he will survive the dissolution of all.

Man's being, which thus transcends in value all secular good, is the gift, not the *forced workmanship* of God.

This greatest gift of existence requires for its value the other minor supplies. The value of existence is in its complete maturity; but maturity depends on "food" and "raiment."

Our superiority is indicated by the *perpetuity* of our existence. Human nature is contrasted with the "grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven." Man is to survive all terrestrial existence.

Another fact upon which Christ bases his argument against solicitude is that the anxious seeking after these temporal blessings is a characteristic of pagan life: "For after all these things do the Gentiles seek."

The advantages of Christ's hearers were superior to those of the heathen. They were acquainted with higher blessings; the heathen were not. They were acquainted with a future state; the heathen were not. They were acquainted with a God on whom to depend; the heathen were not.

Anxious efforts for the temporal supplies of the future, in the case of Christ's disciples, are entirely unnecessary. First, there is the character of God. He is our Father, and knoweth our need. If our wants are not supplied, it must be for one of three reasons: either that He has not the capacity, or that he has not the disposition, or that he is not aware of them.

Second, there is the character of religion: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." The idea is, if a man has real religion, he will have all necessary good. Personal religion is an authoritative power, a divine power, a

righteous power. It is to be sought, "seek" implying that man, at first, is not in possession of it; secondly, that it does not come to him irrespective of choice and effort.

"All these things shall be added unto you." The man who is rightly ruled will study all the laws of being, physical, organic, mental, and moral, and obey the same, and, by *obedience*, will attain all he wants.

There is, third, the character of the future. The future has its provisions. "To-morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." To-morrow will bring its own blessings; the sun will rise and shine, the air will breathe its life, the refreshing streams will flow, the earth will bud and bloom, and all nature will work beneath its God to-morrow to supply the wants of man and beast. To-morrow will have a God, as yesterday and to-day, opening his liberal hand and supplying the wants of every living thing. To-morrow will also have its trials, its afflictions, its pains, its sorrows, its vexations, its disappointments. But "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," which implies that anxieties for the future augment the trials of the present. Antedated trials are imaginary, and they are often the worst. They may never actually occur. When they occur, they are seldom so severe as was expected. There is no consolation under imaginary trials. They are not calamities; they are crimes. "Let us not," says an old writer, "pull that upon ourselves all together, at once, which Providence has wisely ordered to be borne by parcels."

If preferred by the teacher and class, after having gone over the lesson analytically, take up some one of the topics directly or indirectly indicated. Thus, in verse twenty-eight, we learn that, as the beauty of the flower is unfolded by the divine Creator—spirit from *within* from the laws and capacities of its *own* individual life—so must all the adornment of man be unfolded *from within* by the same

Almighty spirit. See 1 Peter iii, 3, 4. As nothing from within can defile a man—Matthew xv, 11—so neither can any thing from without adorn him.

Or, from this same verse, the law—or miracle, rather—of growth can be profitably dwelt upon.

In the review by the superintendent, the blackboard will be found serviceable.

To the infant class the superintendent might, among other questions, put these: What is the verse you have all said? *But seek ye first*, etc. Which is worth the most, a boy or a bird? *A boy*. Who takes care of the birds? *God*. If God takes care of the birds, what will he do for all little children? *Take care of them if they will let him*.

To the Bible and intermediate classes some like these: What does the expression "take no thought" mean? *Not to be distracted or worried about a thing; not to be drawn two ways*. "Consider the lilies;" what lesson, if any, in this? *The duty of trustfulness in regard to raiment, and the vanity of all pomp in regard to dress, since, in all that we can do, we can not equal the glory of the wild flowers*. Will you all repeat the golden text, "But seek ye first," etc.? Who says this? Ought we not to obey Jesus? Have you ever thought of obeying him, seeking his kingdom? Will you seek it *first*? Are you willing to seek now? No one ever loses by seeking God first. At the commencement of the temperance reformation there was a Lutheran minister in Pennsylvania who felt it his duty to preach against the use and sale of intoxicating liquors. This so irritated the wealthier members of his congregation that the greater part of his support was immediately withdrawn. But, with unflinching firmness, he continued his course, till at last he found himself reduced to such straits that night drew on with no flour in the house for the morrow, and no money. He

sat down disheartened, when his little boy came up to him, saying, "Pa, did n't you say God would provide?" Scarcely had the little fellow spoken when a man hallooed at the gate, having traveled six miles across the country to bring the preacher a sack of flour, "thinking he might need it," he said. God will care for me, and for you, and for all these teachers, and for every boy and every girl, if we will only come to him and ask. Let us all ask to-day. Sing the hymn,

"Though troubles assail and dangers affright."

To recapitulate: There are three things essential to the success of the uniform lesson:

1. Study, regular, patient, thorough, and extensive, on the part of the superintendent, the teachers, and scholars.
2. Regular review, either weekly or monthly, of the lessons studied—more advantageously weekly.
3. A proper question or lesson-book, in the hands of both teachers and scholars, to be used in preparing the lesson, but never in the class.

A fourth thing might be stated: In the inauguration of the system, and for one, two, or three years thereafter, it may be best to adhere to the Gospels, and to the historical and narrative portions of the Scriptures.

SEPARATE SERVICES.

THE words refer to a special preaching service for children. In portions of England the children who attend but one session of the Sabbath school per Sabbath, are gathered after school into a chapel-room or into the larger Sunday school room, and are there addressed by a minister or by some layman who has previously prepared

for the exercise. The older children, that is, those of ten years and upward, have gone meantime to the regular preaching service for adults.

These separate services, as conducted by our English friends, observe a programme somewhat as follows: A chapter of the Bible is read, the children repeating clause by clause, or else a parable, a psalm, or part of a narrative, and then the preacher questions the children and they question him. Usually two prayers are offered, one before, the other after, the reading of the Scriptures. These prayers are not offered by the preacher *for* the children, but *with* them, they often joining in concert. Two or three hymns are also intermingled, and then the sermon is given, which is a presentation of some Bible truth in simple, plain words, with appropriate illustrations, and not over thirty minutes in length. Frequently a verse is sung in the middle of the discourse, either as a relief to the little hearers, or as a means of sealing the truth.

In this country separate services, as generally understood, mean the delivery by the pastor of the Church, of a sermon adapted to the tastes and comprehension of all the children of the school. This sermon is furnished sometimes monthly, sometimes quarterly, rarely once a fortnight. Occasionally a pastor takes the skeleton of a discourse preached to the adult members of his congregation, and fills it up with teachings, illustrations, and facts comprehensible to the most juvenile mind, and so makes a children's sermon. A prominent Presbyterian clergyman of New York city has pursued this plan monthly for fourteen years, and with good results. The grown people have been regularly present, in fair force, and have manifested as keen interest in hearing the second as the first edition of the discourse. Rev. Richard Newton, D. D., of Philadelphia, prepares his children's sermons

with the same care as his sermons for adults, and preaches the same monthly at the regular hour for morning service. The attendance of adults as well as of children is very large, and both classes seem alike interested.

There are objections, some of them weighty, to these exclusive discourses. Few ministers are in the habit of preaching them; some do not recognize their utility, and others, though consenting to their propriety, have scarcely the assurance to attempt their preparation. The adults, in some sections, feeling that the sermon to-day is for the boys and girls, are unwilling to be present, and so absent themselves wholly from the forenoon worship.

To meet the difficulty, it has been suggested that the minister have something in every forenoon discourse for the little ones; a sentence, a hint, a fact, a brief incident, or a simply worded moral. Purely theological sermons will not tolerate such digressions; but theological sermons are seldom preached. Almost any doctrinal, exegetical, or practical discourse has room for words and thoughts that any child will relish. No difficulty in feeding the sheep and lambs together:

"I have heard my father say,
And well my father knew,
In it was meat for full-grown men,
And milk for children too."

The "ancient" men—the preachers of one hundred years ago, "of iron mold and adamant heart," as some persist in calling them, had a spring of affectionate tenderness in their breasts that wakened many a child's love toward them.

The objection alleged that any special notice of the children present in the congregation, or any remark directly addressed to them, will detract from the general force or seriousness of the service, is not sustained by

experience. Mannerisms are more injurious than digressions. In the well-known services held in the Union Tabernacle, Philadelphia, from 1858 to 1864, some four hundred different ministers preached nineteen hundred sermons. Many of these ministers found the mixed congregations difficult to interest, and only when they turned and spoke to the children, in tender, plain, and affectionate words, did the truth seem to reach the grown-up people. "I recall distinctly," said Rev. Edwin M. Long to us, "that under these 'digressions,' the eyes of many of the fathers and mothers were filled to overflow with tears, and a score of adult convictions and conversions came to my knowledge afterward, all traceable to the words which were addressed particularly to the children and young people."

Unity, simplicity, and earnestness, it is conceded on all hands, should be elements in every sermon addressed to children. Ought they not also to be elements in every discourse addressed to adults? And is not every boy and every girl an admirer of any *earnest* speaker, though half his words may be beyond their comprehension? "I liked that man very much," said Willie to his father, once after hearing a German minister tell his Christian experience. "How so, Willie, you did not understand his language?" "No, pa, but his eyes were so bright, and he seemed so anxious for us all to feel as he felt."

The behavior of the parents and adults in regard to hearing the sermon has much to do with a child's attention. A child who sees father or mother intently listening will, from the contagiousness of the example, listen himself to see what the minister is saying.

What, then, is wisdom in the matter? Let the circumstances assist in determining. If you are holding two sessions per day of your school, which is of more than

questionable expediency, you will not find it easy to sustain a children's service. If your minister has an aptitude for talking to little as well as big people, let him determine the case. If he is disinclined or not fully qualified, encourage him to say at least a few words in each discourse to the children, or suggest that one of the Scripture lessons preceding the sermon be a narrative or parable in which the young people will be interested. Above all, urge that the presence of the children be recognized in the prayer, and that some part of the petition be made in their behalf.

Furthermore, give the children an active part in the worship. The sermon is not the all. There are the hymns; let one of them be a Sunday school hymn, sung by the children, or by the children and congregation together, or, if it be a hymn in the Church hymn-book, let the words and the tune be familiar to the children. Enjoyed and enjoyable meetings are those in which we all take a part. Children do not wish to feel as a tribe apart. They have a sense of the right to go into the temple, as well as to tarry on the porch, and when we come to the point of granting them something to do in the temple, they will be more than apt to come to it to discharge their duties.

LIBRARY PLANS.

THE more modern plans of distributing the books require that the librarian not only be present before the opening of the school for the distribution of hymn-books and class-books, but that all the work of supplying the scholars be attended to before the school

regularly opens. That this is feasible, and will take but little time, experience confirms. Thus, the librarian sits at the entrance to the library-room, or in front of his case, with the register open before him on a table. Suppose the books to be three hundred in number, and under lock and key. He spreads open the door of his library-case, and is ready for business. As the scholar comes in he hands the book which he returns to the librarian. The librarian looks for the number on the back of the book; he knows to what class the scholar belongs, and knows the number and name, too, of the scholar. He finds a check corresponding to the number on the back of the book in the register opposite the name or number of the scholar. This check he withdraws from the register, puts it in the book, and returns the book to its proper place in the library-case. The scholar now selects from the case any book he wants, and hands it to the librarian, who takes the check out of the book, places it opposite the scholar's name or number in the register, and the work is done. In a school numbering two hundred this system can be worked by the librarian alone in ten minutes, or with an assistant in five or six minutes, and in large schools two librarians can do all the work in from twelve to twenty minutes.

There are two plans for managing libraries, which have had considerable commendation, and have been widely used, the first called the Pigeon-Hole and Card plan, the other, "Geist's Patent Index System." The prominent feature in the *first* is the arrangement of the library-case into "pigeon-holes," or separate departments, for each book, and when a book is taken out a card with the scholar's name upon it is put in the "pigeon-hole," or apartment, from which the book was taken, to remain there till the book is returned. The main feature in the *second* system named above is the division of the library and

catalogue into as many equal parts as there are classes in the school. Each class is supplied with one of these partial, or division, catalogues, from which they make their selections, and mark the number of the book selected upon a small library slate. These partial catalogues *rotate* through the various classes on successive Sabbaths in regular order.

A combination of these two plans has been effected by Mr. E. H. Young, of Illinois, with the following characteristics:

1. Arrange the library-case and books into as many equal divisions as there are classes in the school.

2. Arrange the *divisions* into "pigeon-holes," or separate departments, for each book. (This may best be done with strips of tin, about two and a half inches wide, and the proper length, slipped into grooves made in the shelves, above and below, with a saw. The front edge of these strips should be turned, to prevent their cutting or soiling the books.) Number the divisions consecutively, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.; also the "*pigeon-holes*," beginning with *one* (1) in each *division*.

3. Use *Geist's* adhesive *tags* for backs of books, showing both *division* and *pigeon-hole* numbers, thus: Books in division one are numbered 101, 102, 103, etc.; in division two, 201, 202, 203, etc.; in division three, 301, 302, 303, etc.

4. Make a *catalogue* of the books in each division separately—may be *written*, in a plain hand, in small, cheap *pass-books*. Number these division catalogues to correspond with their respective divisions.

5. Letter the *classes*—A, B, C, D, etc.—and number the scholars in each class—1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Provide a small *library slate* for each class, with its *class-letter* at the top, and the scholars' numbers at the side.

6. Prepare a card for each scholar, with his or her name upon it, and also the *class-letter* and *number* of the scholar.

Write to J. M. W. Geist, Lancaster, Penn., stating number of classes in your school, also the number of books you propose putting in each division, and order *two sets* of division numbers—one for library divisions, and one for catalogues—*inside tablets*, *tags* for backs of books, *library slates* for as many classes as you have, and one *librarian's index*. This last item is important to insure a *regular rotation* of catalogues, and also to show how long an unreturned book has been out. (Mr. Geist is manufacturer of all these fixtures, and patentee of some of them.)

Working of the System.—At or before the opening of the school the librarian supplies each class with a slate, and *one* of the division catalogues. As the scholars come they select from the catalogue, or their teacher for them, and mark the numbers of the books selected opposite their respective class-numbers on the slate. At the close of the general opening exercises, and before recitations begin, or, better still, require those wanting books to be present five to eight minutes before the opening of the school, to select their books, and then, *at the opening*, the librarian may take up the slates and catalogues, and, *during recitations*, take from the library the books selected by the various classes, as shown by the slates. As the *books* are taken out, the scholars' *cards* are put in their places. *After recitations* the librarian delivers the books, with the slates, to the teachers, who distribute to the scholars, the slate showing to which scholar each book belongs.

Returned books are left at the library, which should be near the door, as the scholars pass into the school-room, and are, at the same time, arranged by the librarian in their proper places in the library. As the books are put

into the pigeon-holes, the cards are taken out and placed in a card-box that has separate apartments for *each class*.

Advantages of the System.—1. The simplicity of its working apparatus. *One entire catalogue only*—divided into as many parts as there are classes—for the whole school.

2. An equitable distribution of the books is secured to every class by the rotation of catalogues.

3. The *least possible time* is required in selecting and distributing, as all classes are served simultaneously, or as nearly so as possible, and a *large* school may be served about as quickly as a *small* one.

4. No two scholars in different classes *can* select the same book at the same time, and no two in the same class need do so, as each can see the numbers previously selected by his class-mates.

5. The library will be new and fresh to the school *much longer* than by any other mode of distribution.

6. Teachers and classes are not interrupted during recitations, nor have scholars any books during recitations to distract attention from the lessons.

7. No scholar can get a second book till the first is returned.

8. The librarian can tell, at a glance, who has any unreturned book, and how long it has been out.

9. No *records* are necessary. The system is, in itself, a complete *self-register* of every thing that need be known of the library.

Remarks.—Those now using the “Pigeon-Hole and Card” plan will secure the principal advantages of this *combination* by simply dividing their catalogue, and procuring the necessary library slates, and working it as above described, and thereby *economize time, promote good order*, and secure other important advantages. One of these

advantages will be apparent from the following statement of the practical working of the "Pigeon-Hole and Card" plan: Suppose one hundred scholars have drawn books on any given Sabbath; the one who presents himself first at the next Sabbath will find one hundred *empty pigeon-holes*, from any one of which he might wish to draw, and this difficulty is constantly recurring; in fact, there is *no certainty* of any scholar getting any book he wants at *any time*. This difficulty is entirely removed by the *Combination System*. The difficulty with *Geist's* system is that *much unnecessary work* is required of the librarian, in consequence of which classes are *interfered with during recitations*.

THE SINGING.

THE leader of singing, as previously intimated, should be a Christian, for the reason that sacred song is more an inspiration than an art—the expression of emotion rather than the display of vocal culture. The basis of all musical effect is feeling. As feeling is from the heart, so must be its expression, else it is an unknown tongue. The understanding, or head, can utter no music, least of all, religious music. Sounds may be given in time, pitch, and power, but the music will be wanting. The effort will be at best but a counterfeit. It may be beautiful, but for some reason it will not *find* you. Some false quality of sound will betray *execution*. The solemnity will be hollow, the softness flat, the loudness a strain. If feelings, then, be requisite to perfect musical utterance, how shall one express the sublime conceptions and emotions of the worship of God whose heart has never bowed

in reverence and adoration before Divinity, thrilled with the joy of pardon, melted with pity for a Savior's sufferings, nor beat responsive to a Savior's love?

Possessing piety, the leader may add many important lesser qualifications. He should be able to explain the spirit of the hymn, be a pleasant speaker, and be able to read well. If he have, in addition, an attractive, cheerful countenance, and can picture the joy, the hope, the love, the fear of which he sings in his own face, he will succeed the better for that. He will in general be *aided* in his duties by a small choir. Large schools can not be easily led without one. It need not be a company of thoroughly trained singers. Four to twelve of the better singers, facing the school, will be sufficient to relieve the voice of the leader from a tax too severe for a single person, while it will enable him to perfect the singing in its minor details. With these aids he is ready to commence the work of instruction. This he should do by impressing upon the school the *sentiment* of the song before them. Once imbued with that, it will require little art to make them sing with feeling, expression, and effect.

As to the language and subject-matter of the hymns to be sung, those are best adapted to use which are based on and center in the great *facts* of redemption—the love of God—the grace of Jesus Christ, and the joys and hopes of the new life in Christ.

The hymns should, moreover, be such as are elevating—such as have a high inspiration, an uplifting power. They should also be catholic in thought and feeling, equally adapted to all classes—to all periods of life.

Does it get old? Does it weary? Does it ever seem common? If so, reject the hymn. As to the music—the vehicle of the hymn—I will only say that it should be *adapted*, suited and natural to the thought.

As to new pieces and rehearsals: School-time is too precious to be spent in the mere learning of tunes. The half hour before the opening of school, or some portion of a week-day, is more suitable for this exercise. Having learned a new piece, do not be hasty to bring it forward. Something of its freshness will have wasted in its course of training. Give time for the weariness of rehearsal to be forgotten. Four weeks is not too long; you may then take up whatever novelty you have taught, and rely upon its being sung with spirit.

What portion of time should be allotted to singing? No rule can be laid down. It should be remembered that singing is worship, is also one of the teacher's most important aids, useful at times to precede, thus preparing the mind and heart for the reception of truth by inducing the docile spirit, and at times most effective to follow the stated lesson, and fasten, as with iron bands, truth already communicated. In its employment for either purpose, a wise discrimination must be exercised, and for this exercise it is desirable that the superintendent should be himself a singer. If the subject of his remarks be faith, he can in no way better impress his thought than by a song of faith; if love, than by a song of love. But the song must be *impromptu*; not *actually* impromptu—few have always an appropriate song at command—but *apparently* so. Knowing beforehand the line of his remarks, he should select and locate through his discourse such hymns as will aid him in impressing his thoughts, with the same prayerful care which he exercises in the preparation of the remarks themselves. There must be no running, no bustle, no delay. The song must well up from a full heart—must belong to his thought, and be a part and parcel of it.

SINGING AS A SPIRITUAL GAIN.

IN the year 1833 a band of young men, richer in faith and love than in silver and gold, determined to do something for the lower-class children of the splendid but corrupt city of Hamburg, Germany. They gathered a few of the very worst together, boys that had lived by thieving, sleeping nights under carts or with the hogs, and reduced in manners and morals to the very lowest point in the scale. They first washed, cleaned, and combed them; then commenced their education, giving special prominence to the Bible, the Catechism, and the study and practice of music. A strange and rapid transformation followed. Miserable, wicked, sunken as they were, all were given to understand that Christ was in each case their personal Savior. The songs and hymns were specially suited to their circumstances, and Dr. Wichern, the chief founder and present manager of the institution, says that the singing of an appropriate hymn did the first work of awakening in the hearts of the hardest inmates. Sometimes a voice would drop from the group of singers, and then weeping and sobbing would be heard instead. The children would say they could not sing: they must think of their past lives—of their brothers and sisters—of their parents living in vice and misery at home. On several occasions the singing exercise had to be given up, the children being sent into the garden to recover themselves.

This incident shows the power of Christian song over the hearts of children who had never enjoyed an hour of religious instruction at the hands of parents, and the principle involved is worthy of being pondered by those

who are in the habit of deploring that the children in our schools have but just one half hour out of seven days in which to think of themselves and their obligations to the Savior. The minds of the children are being impressed, not only during the time of the giving of the lesson, but during every other exercise of the school in its one hour and a quarter or half of continuance, and also during every day of the week, and during almost every hour of every day; for where is the child whose tongue is not singing,

“We ’ve listed in a holy war;”

or,

“Come to Jesus, just now;”

or,

“Blessed Bible, how I love it !”

We recall the case of a little German girl, a member of our infant class, who understood but little of English, and who could not spell out a single verse of the New Testament. One day, whispering in our ear, she said, “Please can ’t we sing, ‘Come to Jesus,’ teacher?” “And why, Mary?” “Because I have been singing it all the week at home, and my mother loves it so much, and says she wishes she knew how she could come.” The enlightening, and convicting, and sanctifying power of our hymns we shall ourselves never fully know. God will reveal all to us in another world.

Sir Bernard Burke, in his volume, entitled “*Vicissitudes of Noble Families*,” gives a touching instance of the tendency of flowers to linger upon the spots where they were once tenderly nurtured. “Being in search,” he says, “of a pedigree with reference to the Findernes, once a great family seat in Derbyshire, England, I sought for their ancient hall. Not a stone remained to tell where it stood. I entered the church; not a single record of a Finderne was there. I accosted a villager, hoping to glean

some stray traditions of the Findernes. 'Findernes?' he said, 'we have no Findernes here; but we have something which once belonged to them—we have Findernes' flowers.' 'Show me them,' I replied; and the old man led me into a field, which still retained faint traces of terrace and foundation. 'There,' said he, pointing to a bank of garden flowers, grown wild, there are Findernes' flowers, brought by Sir Geoffrey from the Holy Land, and do what we will they will never die.'" O blessed hymns sung in the Sunday school! O wondrous lessons learned there! flowers brought from the Holy Land—flowers blossoming amid earth's perishings and neglect—flowers of which it may, in many a case, be said, "Do what we will, they will never die."

THE MONTHLY MISSIONARY MEETING.

SELECT some mission-field, and give briefly its history. "We have India as our subject to-day, rather one of the missions in India, one thousand miles north of Calcutta," said a superintendent to us, on taking our seat in his school. "One of the elder scholars has just read a short paper respecting the topography and geography of the country, and I am going to give them a few facts in regard to the mission, its beginning, its trials, its growth, converts, etc." Interest a school in the topography of a heathen field of labor, its people, their social and domestic life, and you enlist their attention and sympathy. Having their sympathy, it is easy to secure their contributions.

Another Superintendent's Statement.—Our missionary Sabbath is always interesting. Whoever does the speaking

does it having received previous notice, and being thoroughly prepared. As an illustration: One Sabbath morning one of our teachers spoke for ten minutes on the Zulus of South Africa, their natural history, social and domestic habits, notions of the Deity, and a future life. The teacher had been reading Rev. J. G. Wood's history of this people, and mention was made that all Zulus believed in an immortality, or transmigration of the soul. Their notions, however, were crude. Snakes that came gliding into their dwellings or huts were seldom irritated or touched, much less killed, because they thought in injuring them they might hurt the souls of departed friends inhabiting the same.

Little Zulu children were often made the subjects of needless cruel punishment. The wild elephants, with other animals, are in the habit of making raids on the gardens. These raids are in the night, and the belief is that they can be frightened off by children's voices. So, when the elephants are expected, all the young children, down to unconscious infants, are roused from slumber, and taken to the gardens and whipped with small switches to scare away the marauders. The exercise is kept up, in numerous instances, till the little backs are all welts and soreness.

The mingling of these and kindred facts with facts of another type touching the moral and religious nature of heathen tribes and countries has a freshening and enkindling effect. The teacher is not only himself interesting and interested, but the whole school will look forward with pleasure to the coming of missionary Sunday, and will have their pockets and hearts in a healthy condition.

A Third Superintendent.—Get children to work for any one, and they will soon begin to think of the relation of their work to the person for whom they are working. It is not the amount the children give, but that it is given for

Jesus. Get them to feel this. The children in our school inclose their offering in an envelope, with a statement showing how they obtained the money. These little papers are very interesting, showing the sacrifices the children made: "For selling cinders, three cents;" "for getting up head in class at day school, one cent;" "running errands for ladies and gentlemen, four cents;" "trimming dolls;" "holding horses;" "sweeping streets;" "shoveling snow;" and saved "from fire-crackers, July 4th, \$2.17;" "taking one cent a day out of my lunch money"—that is, one penny out of three; "going up to wash dishes for Mrs. Stevens;" "hemming dish-cloths;" "going to Mr. Brown's with a bundle," etc.

Let the children know where their contributions are going; let them see that their money is put to some use. One Sabbath afternoon I had a letter from a missionary in Persia, to whom the children had sent some of their contributions. O, how long they had waited for that letter; and how glad they were to know that their money had reached him safely! And then I pointed at Persia on the map, and showed them how far the letter had to come. We have a large map of the world, and at every point where we would interest our children and where they give any thing, we put a *gold patch*. Said one of our little girls, "Won't it be grand when we get it covered all over with *gold patches*!" "That won't convert the world, though, my dear." "No; but it will do something, won't it?"

When we tell our children that their money is going somewhere over the world in its errand of mercy, let us show them *that it went there*. I used as a boy to be very incredulous as to where all the multitude of pennies went. Somebody said they went somewheres, and I presumed they did, but I used to doubt it! Let us tell our scholars

all the circumstances we can gather as to when, and where, and how their money was applied.

A step further. Always see that the spirit of giving is one of love to Christ and not of rivalry. I have seen our youths' missionary societies lose their power, O, how sadly! by the pitting of one class against another.

Then, too, the money that is given should be *earned* by the scholars. It is the saved penny, the penny that costs something, that does the boy and girl good, that makes missionaries of them. How shall we get the children's *saved* pennies? In a thousand ways. This little piece of ribbon—holding up a strip of faded red—has done more good than I can describe to you.

I was once speaking at a youths' missionary meeting, on the spirit of self-denial for Christ's sake, and a little Irish Catholic girl came to me with something in her hand. It was this piece of ribbon. "Mr. Wells," she said, "do you think you could get a penny for that?" "I do n't know but I could, child. Where did it come from?" And as I looked at the little thing, I saw that one-half of the ribbon of her bonnet—and there was not much left—corresponded with the piece in her hand. It came from her bonnet! She had cut it off! I looked on the marker—she had made of it a plain book-marker—and saw the words "*Lord, save.*" "Nellie, where did you get that motto?" "That's a little prayer I say every day, and I love it so much I thought I would put that on." I saw that little girl, with nine scholars in that Sunday school, come out to make their profession of faith in Jesus Christ; and I believe that one of the earliest acts she ever did was this little one of taking the ribbon from her bonnet for Jesus. The first step that a child takes out of love to Jesus Christ—the giving or doing of that which costs them something—is one of the grandest lessons.

they can ever learn. The doing of something for any body or any object leads to the loving of it, and in cultivating the spirit of self-denial we will get from the children all they have to give, and will obtain more for the cause of Christ than from appealing to any other motive or by any other measures.

LEADING YOUR CLASS TO CHRIST.

PREPARE your lesson with a view to producing a *conviction* of the truth in the minds of your scholars. Children, as well as adults, have their questionings which can not be silenced by mere talk. The Great Teacher explained, elucidated, and applied the doctrines of the Gospel so as to make known the divine character and will, both in their general features and in their special relations. With wondrous skill and beauty he progressively unfolded the message of repentance and faith, graciously repeating the same vital truths because Jewish ears were dull of hearing, yet ever varying the tone, lest the strain should grow wearisome, making heavenly things so simple that all could comprehend, and yet so attractive that all must admire. Let the Sunday school teacher so unfold the truth in all of its parts and bearings that his class shall understand the reasonableness of rendering God service.

2. Let the preparation of the lesson be with an eye to the *persuasion* of each individual scholar. Simply to convince a child is to make his head right; to persuade him, without convincing, is to set his heart right. The one leads to a cold formality, the other to fanaticism. The two must be combined. Where conviction is accompanied by

persuasion the judgment influences the affections, the affections react upon the will, and the will prompts to corresponding action. There is thus obtained what Luther calls a living faith. The work of thus preparing the lesson reacts upon the teacher. Patient pondering of divine truth is the food and nutriment of holiness. There is no surer way of becoming interested in a truth than by investigating it. To assist in the work of persuasion let the teacher,

3. Give special attention to his manner out of and in the class.

"I knew Mr. Smith would recognize me," said a young lady to her mother, as they were leaving the street-car in which Mr. Smith and themselves had been riding. Mr. Smith always knew his scholars, whether in the car, or on the street, or in the church, or in the school, or at home, or wherever he or they might be, and his kindly recognition had much to do in prepossessing his class to receive instruction on the Sabbath. Always notice your scholars in the street with a polite, cordial bow—not with a nod, as you would hail an omnibus, but with a pleasant smile, to show you are pleased to see them.

Of the celebrated Rugby school, in England, of which Dr. Arnold was principal, one of its pupils remarks: "The one image before me is not Rugby, but Arnold—not Arnold's words so much as Arnold's manners. I can not efface, if I would, the photograph he made on my inner heart." What is true of the earnest secular teacher is still more true of the teacher of sacred things. "The neck is bent by the sword," says the Arab proverb, "but heart is bent by heart."

4. How may I get my own heart full? By looking unto Jesus—by much lingering in the closet, that citadel of spiritual power. It has been said that the power of the pulpit has waned because of the little time given in secret prayer

by its ministers. Certain it is that the ministers of the olden time, who went into their pulpits from a season of real and absorbing communion with God, went in the demonstration of the Spirit and power. Do not consider the quarter or half hour spent daily on your knees enough, but have that spirit which will always be ready to plead with God for yourself and your scholars. "Let your prayer," as quaint Andrew Fuller expresses it, "be as a lump of some solid substance whose nature is to melt in liquid, and which gives a taste to every drop of liquid in which it is allowed to stand awhile."

During some great argument, long years ago, one of the debaters was observed very busily employed with his pencil. Before he arose to speak his cause seemed almost hopeless, but he had not spoken many minutes before the minds of his hearers were changed, and he was declared victor. His notes were examined, when it was found that they consisted of only two words, "Light, Lord!" It was the prayer of that speaker's heart going forth to God. Such must be the prayer of the Sunday school teacher, "Light, Lord," and when he gets light unto his own soul he can not help shedding it upon the souls of others.

5. Acquaint yourself with the life and habits of successful teachers. "Every child for Jesus, and every one *now*," was the motto of a New York lady, whose success was constant and marvelous in leading her scholars to Christ. "I took every one on my heart to Jesus. I carried them to my closet; I told Jesus all that I wanted of him in regard to Mary, and Emma, and Jane, and all the rest, and he heard me and helped me."

"I knew a lady once in Columbus," said Rev. J. L. Grover, in a Sabbath school meeting, "whose distress for her class became extreme. She could not rest while they were unsaved. To some she dropped notes, revealing

her concern, and asking them if they would not seek the Savior. Others she invited to come Saturdays and see her at her own home, and there reading the Bible and supplicating a throne of grace; several were converted. In time all were saved, and the great mountain was taken from her heart."

Mr. Robert Brown, long a successful Bible class teacher in the Fifth Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, has usually in attendance about seventy-five young ladies and gentlemen. On occasion of any special spiritual manifestations, he silently notes those most concerned, takes their names and place of residence, and makes personal calls, talking with them on religion, offering prayer in their behalf, and leaving such tracts or treatises as may be suited to each individual case. During some years the accessions to the Church from the class have been as high as fifteen and twenty, and there never was a year without some.

The superintendent, if a man of consistent and active piety, can greatly aid in making the teacher's instructions effective. He can, as elsewhere indicated, do almost any thing with his school that he desires. If he aims to make it the banner school of the town or city in raising money for a benevolent cause, he can make it such. If he sets the mark of good order, and urges constantly to the attainment of it, teachers and scholars may be made to partake of his spirit, and the end be secured. If he resolves that his school shall be preëminently a school of Christ, and if he insists that all live and work for this one end, every heart, old and young, may be made to feel the power.

Add to all this, that in the review of the lesson the superintendent press home with tenderness and earnestness the practical truths of the same, and the conditions

are at once such that hearts that may be inquiring for the Savior will be greatly assisted in finding him. If the atmosphere of the school, on the other hand, be light or airy, repellent or cold, all members will be more or less unfavorably affected. And any rising emotions of love to the Savior may thus be frosted, and the day of grace to individual souls far put off.

Urge your scholars to accompany you to the regular preaching service of the Church, and to the week and Sunday evening prayer and social meetings. "The Church in the Sabbath school, and the Sabbath school in the Church," says Dr. Walden, "is the key that solves the question as to how we are to save the children."

Attend the teachers' prayer meeting, held either before or after the session of the school. You will find it a great quickener of your spiritual power. Take such of your scholars as may be seriously impressed into this meeting, and encourage them to speak or pray, or to ask the prayers of the meeting in their behalf.

CHILDREN'S PRAYER MEETINGS.

"**W**HAT shall we do with our children after their conversion?" In answering this question some Churches have adopted, in a modified form, the Methodist class meeting, and have placed the children in societies, with leaders over them. Before us lies a small pamphlet entitled "The Faithful Band, of the Seventh Presbyterian Church, Chicago, organized June 12, 1864." From its pages we extract as follows:

We ask admission to our Churches for those who we believe give evidence of that inward change of heart which

is the title-page to salvation, and are met with the argument that the applicants are young, that they can not comprehend the great change, that their fears may have been awakened, their feelings practiced upon, their sympathies all stirred up by the story of the Cross, and that they do not appreciate their true position, wait till they give evidence that their conversion is permanent, etc. Wait? Where? Out in the cold world? Gather the sheep all safely into the fold and leave the lambs without?

To meet this emergency the Faithful Band had its beginning. Its covenant is simple and within the comprehension of all, and we believe that its faithful observance will prove of incalculable benefit to those who comply with its every requirement.

Its educational feature is one of paramount importance. Christians too much neglect reading the Scriptures. Had it been incorporated into their young life history that one chapter of God's Word must be carefully perused each day, under all circumstances, the habit would have been so formed that its omission in riper years would bring its own rebuke; the morning and evening prayer would become as much a matter of necessity as the morning and evening meal. The promise to confess Christ every opportunity is a standing reproof to those whose voices are never heard where God's people assemble to invoke blessings from the Almighty, and the prayer meetings of a quarter of a century hence shall be made precious to the soul in the exercise of that early Christian education which eliminates the Jesus-taught doctrine that "men ought always to pray, and never to faint."

The long-continued practice of a faithful observance of our simple covenant, interwoven through the growing years, will so infuse the habit of regularity into the system that the cloud "no larger than a man's hand" shall not

become the subterfuge behind which the soul can satisfy itself for continued, or even occasional absence from the Churchward paths which lead into the courts of the Lord.

We do not claim to hold *all* who seek admission to our band. We can not expect it. If the Christ-chosen band of twelve, gathered from the shores of the Sea of Galilee, presented to the world a treacherous-hearted Judas, *we*, children, certainly can not attain to perfection; yet we *do* urge that we are sowing the seeds of salvation deeply in the heart with our one chapter a day and one verse a week, and we have the assurance that the word of the Lord shall not return to him void. The lesson we desire to inculcate is this: That this band may ever prove an effective auxiliary to the Church, a fruitful nursery of the Lord, from which shall be transplanted germs of a vigorous growth, whose pure lives and Christian graces shall adorn and embellish the house of our God.

Order of Exercises.—1. Selection of Hymns; 2. Opening Song; 3. Prayer; 4. Singing; 5. Reading; 6. Singing; 7. Covenant; 8. Prayer; 9. Twenty-third Psalm; 10. Silent Prayer; 11. Singing; 12. Selections; 13. Remarks; 14. Admissions; 15. Lord's Prayer; 16. Closing Song.

Covenant.—1. We have promised to love the LORD JESUS CHRIST; 2. We believe GOD, for his Son's sake, has forgiven our sins; 3. We hereby covenant to live for CHRIST; 4. We will try and discharge our *whole* duty; 5. We will read *one* chapter in the Bible every day; 6. We will pray to GOD morning and evening; 7. We will urge others to come to JESUS; 8. We will confess CHRIST every opportunity; 9. We will attend Church and prayer meeting; 10. We will keep this Covenant, GOD helping us.

Penalty.—The name of any member of this band who shall violate any of the articles of this solemn covenant shall be erased with a pencil till a return of the erring one

to duty, when the erasure shall be canceled; and while the rubber removes the mark, yet leaves the indentation of the pencil, so shall it be a reminder that, though neglect of duty may be atoned for by repentance, it leaves a stain which shall often be to the conscience a well-spring of regret. BE FAITHFUL, THEN, TO EVERY DUTY.

Pledge.—The pledge is in the five lines following:

We'll try to prove FAITHFUL,
We'll try to prove FAITHFUL,
We'll try to prove FAITHFUL,
FAITHFUL, FAITHFUL,
Till we all shall meet above.

Out of two hundred and fifty children enrolled in the band, scarcely half a dozen have proved recreant, while the majority have been active and successful in gathering others into the Church and to the Savior.

Mr. Reynolds, of Peoria, Ill., already referred to, says:

I have in connection with my school a society called "The Faithful Band." They are composed of the scholars who give good evidences of being "born again." They meet every Thursday evening at seven o'clock, in the prayer meeting room of our church. The order of exercises is about as follows: 1. Singing; 2. Prayer by the leader—myself or the assistant superintendent always lead the meeting; 3. Reading a portion of Scripture, and short explanations; 4. Singing, after which the meeting is thrown open for general exercises by the children, such as prayers, telling experiences, asking prayer for themselves or for others, telling what they have been doing for *Jesus*, etc. I have the part of the city in which my school is situated districted off, and to each member a district of one or two squares, or blocks, assigned. It is the duty of this scholar to visit each house in this district once a month—I give them Sunday school papers to take with them—and find

out how many children there are in their respective districts who do not go to Sunday school, and to try and get them to attend our school, or some other. During the week they do this work, and on Sunday go after and bring the children with them. A few Sundays ago one member of our "band" brought *ten* new scholars into our school. At the weekly meeting the children tell what success they have met with, their encouragements and discouragements. It teaches them how to work, and when they get to be men and women they are not drones in the Church, but useful members. We must not only seek to have the children converted, but train them aright afterward, or they will go back to the world and be lost to the Church and Christ. I believe in *work* to keep the heart warm, whether in the Sunday school or Church.

TEACHERS' PRAYER MEETINGS.

SUPPOSE the school to commence at nine o'clock in the morning. Let the prayer meeting for teachers commence at exactly half-past eight, or, which is better, twenty minutes to nine.

Have all the little details thoroughly systematized, so that not a moment be lost.

Have each exercise brief. A prayer of five minutes takes just one quarter of the entire twenty minutes, and will be sure to kill it. Let the prayers not exceed a minute and a half to two minutes.

If a word of exhortation is offered, let it be pertinent to the occasion. A wandering away to South Africa or Hindoostan is well enough at the time we are considering those distant countries and their claims, but neither South

Africa nor Hindoostan should be considered when home and home interests are the theme. Keep to the subject of the meeting. Let the prayers be specific. Whatever the object, pray for the object.

In a school that we know, the teachers' prayer meeting convenes with the precision of a railroad time-table, at eight o'clock, forty minutes. The superintendent is there ten minutes before the time for opening. The school is a large one, and of the forty-five enrolled teachers forty are usually present. Sometimes ten, fifteen, or twenty of the scholars are admitted as a privilege. A single verse is sung, then two very short, earnest prayers are offered. The superintendent now, in a few concentrated, pertinent, burning words, presents to the meeting some special Scriptural topic—usually the leading thought of the day's lesson. He urges special attention to the necessity of this day laboring for the salvation of the scholars. Now a verse; now two more prayers, as brief and fervent as the two first; then two verses, followed by one prayer; then a single verse of praise or thanksgiving.

Here are ten distinct, sharply defined exercises, yet with no crowding, no irreverent haste, and yet the meeting only eighteen or nineteen minutes in length.

Some of the teachers most prompt and regular in attendance are those who live the furthest from the school, and who have to make the most exertion to get there.

Is it any wonder that the manifest presence and power of the Divine Spirit is constantly felt in this school? that one after another of the wandering lambs are brought back to the fold? that whole classes are won for Jesus? that *all* the teachers regard this morning prayer meeting, not only as the most precious of all the Sunday school services, but as that which *crowns* and *completes* their preparation for teaching?

ADDRESSES TO CHILDREN.

“**W**HEN a man can talk well to children, there must be very much about him that is gentle and lovely.” So wrote his biographer concerning Hon. Michael Farady, the great English chemist. Mr. Farady was in the habit of lecturing on scientific subjects to the young, and he almost invariably gave with happiest effect a moral turn to his teachings.

In a study of the elements which constituted the success of Prof. Farady, every teacher can profit. He was never tedious, never prolix, yet never obscure, never a scold, never pointless. He drove his nail, and stopped. The juveniles found him irresistible, even down to the years when every hair of his head was like the snow. In his intellect and heart combined lay the secret of his power; the one was clear as the cloudless noon, the other fervid as the Summer's sun, and the two always had a common purpose—that of gently conquering and carrying captive each youthful auditor.

In all our efforts to address the young we should first have in our own mind an object distinctly defined. We should know what we are desirous of accomplishing, and every movement, direct and side, should keep this steadily in the gaze. Around our central thought, as satellites around the sun, all lesser thoughts should cluster in closest harmony. Every fact and illustration should have immediate and absolute relevancy to this central thought, and no story should be told for the sake simply of a story being told, nor to exhibit our skill in the narration. The temptation to please the adult portion of the audience,

rather than to edify the children, will sometimes be strong, but yielding to it must ordinarily be disastrous.

Show carefulness as to your style. Latin derivatives and recondite English words are out of place when plain Saxon will convey the sense better. Have the youngest nearest you, and often direct your remarks to them, varying your tone by an occasional word to some one who may be less attentive than others. As long as you have the eyes of the youngest you are pretty sure of the eyes and ears of the older ones. Dean Swift, so the story goes, was wont to read his sermons to his cook before their delivery, to find out whether all the words in them could be easily understood by plain people. If those who desire to interest and instruct children would remember how they talk to their own or their neighbors' boys and girls around the family hearth-stone, they would have success where now they have failure.

Vivaciousness.—There is nothing that so stirs a child as liveliness of manner. Children will respond to every gleam of the eye, to every throb of the heart; but as by intuition they will detect and repudiate a lukewarm earnestness or a counterfeited enthusiasm. You must believe what you say, and say what you believe, with a roused heart, else you never can rouse your hearers.

Jael put his nail to the head of Sisera, and drove it sheer and clear through his brain. Sometimes the adult speaker must have a rhetoric which will thus force its way through the brain; but the speaker to children should come to them with the mellow, winning, heavenly style of St. John, making them see how precious their souls are; how lost without Christ; and then how his own yearns for theirs. Against the heart filled and overflowing with the Divine love, no other heart can stand. Tears will call for tears, love for love, tenderness for tenderness.

Arm yourself thus, have your eye steadily fixed; resolve, God helping you, on conquest; forget the present in the eternal; invoke the Holy Spirit; ask God to show you the way of seizing hearts, and your words must accomplish their purpose. Stories, and facts, and incidents, and pictures may rule for the moment, but these are only aids in the approach to the citadel of hearts that you aim to make yours and Christ's. Let nothing divert you from this one thing, and that one thing—the salvation of the children—shall be accomplished.

Mr. R. W. Raymond, of Brooklyn, N. Y., discussing the general subject, remarks:

Good addresses are a great pleasure and attraction; but the best address that ever was delivered is not fit to be substituted for the Sunday school lesson. I have heard superintendents say, "Now, children, as we have Mr. So-and-so with us to-day, we will dispense with the lesson, and listen to a few remarks from him. This is all wrong. I would not attempt to lay down a general rule against any address except on stated days. In the country, where speakers are not easily obtained, it is perhaps well to catch them when they come, and to make room for their addresses after the lesson. My own experience in a city school sustains the following rules:

1st. Set apart one Sunday in each month as a missionary meeting, and omit the lesson regularly on that day, supplying its place with addresses and general exercises. Do not invite nor allow *any one* to address the school at any other time. Above all, do n't be continually making long speeches to the school yourself. The superintendent is always in danger of losing his influence by too much talking; and he should avoid this whenever he can. Once or twice in each year address your own school, and do your best, preparing yourself as carefully as if they were

an audience of strangers. To them and yourself it will be a great benefit.

2d. Do not rely upon chance visitors; but invite a speaker beforehand for your monthly meeting—one whom you know to be able to interest the school.

3d. Never let a speaker run over his time so as to prolong the session of the school. If you are not punctual in closing, how can you expect the rest to be punctual in coming?

THE FAMILY AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

WITHOUT assuming to decide whether Robert Raikes be the organizer of the modern Sunday school or not, it is well known that the scholars whom he gathered together on the Sabbath for instruction were the children of irreligious parents. They were miserable, ragged, wretched boys, the pest of the streets of Gloucester, and it was because of parental neglect that the movement was commenced. Those, therefore, who think the design of the Sunday school movement is to take the place of family religious instruction, speak without proper deliberation. The Sunday school is an assistant to the parent, not something in the place of the parent. Antagonism it never has had, and never purposes to have, either to the family or the Church. It rejoices most devoutly in any interest that the Church or parents may take in the training of the children, and never is a true teacher's heart so full as when the mother or father tells of his desire to help in leading the child to Jesus.

But how, it will be asked, shall parents assist in the work of religiously instructing their children?

1. They can themselves be consistent Christians. Example pleads with higher power than words. A life of steady, uniform, patient devotion to Christ will impress the child's heart in such a way that all the rough rubs of the world will scarcely or never obliterate those impressions.

2. Attend carefully to family devotion, and see that none of the children are absent sleeping, playing, reading, or something else during the exercise. Accept no excuse but sickness. Read not as a dull formality, but with a view to obtain important instruction for time and eternity. Enliven and improve the service by singing. If there is but little musical talent in the family, give that little to the Lord. Our hymns are often full of petitions, and the music quickens our faculties.

Occasionally, just before or just after singing a stanza, call attention to sentiments which otherwise might be passed over with negligence from frequent repetition. "Do we feel this gratitude which we are about to express to God for having kept us during the night?" Or, "Are we sincere in this confession of sin which we have made, or are about to make?" Such questions would repress carelessness, and lead all to remember that what is said on earth is remembered in heaven.

Encourage your children to take part in the exercises. "I have a boy," said a friend once, "who is twelve years of age, who, two or three times a week, joins in the prayer at the family altar."

"The Republic is at the fireside," said the Roman orator. *The Church is there too.* It is a small field, may be, but it is worth the most assiduous cultivation. Your sons and your daughters are growing for the pulpit, for the religious press, for the place of social prayer, for benevolent labor, and for the committal of Christian enterprise. Fill them with the truth; breathe over their

widening path the breath of a father's prayer, and expect, as you *may* expect, the blessing of the Highest on their souls.

3. See that your children observe their secret prayers on retiring. "I call up," said a man to us whose head was white with sixty Winters, "I call up the sight of my mother tucking me away in my little trundle bed. Every lineament of that sainted face is as clear to me as though she were here by my side. There is the little bed. I almost hear the creak of its wooden wheels; I almost see the snow-white spread; I almost feel the warm blankets that I crept between; but, above all, I hear the voice of my mother reminding me to repeat,

'Now I lay me down to sleep.'

Shall I, can I ever forget that little prayer—little, indeed, in one sense, but mighty in making me feel my obligation to serve God." Let the older children be instructed to make confession to God of the sins of the day, and implore help to overcome for the future.

4. Make the Sabbath a pleasant day. Set apart an hour that shall be the children's hour. Question each about the experience of the day, concerning the Sunday school lesson, the words of the superintendent, the singing, the sermon. Question *out* of each the truth taken in, and make them feel that their duties and delights are yours also.

Through the week inquire concerning the next Sunday's lesson. Help to the elucidation and illustration of it. Any thing you may read bearing on the lesson tell, and, if necessary, retell. One day not long since the lesson in a class we had charge of involved the subject of sloth. We asked the girls to state an illustration. It so happened that one of them had taken occasion, through the week, to

mention the subject of the lesson to her father. He promised her help. Some time afterward, taking from his pocket a bit of a newspaper, he read her a story of the South American sloth, as told by Professor Agassiz in his late book of travels. The Professor found some of these animals on the banks of the Amazon, so absolutely lazy that a vigorous whipping would scarcely make them open their eyelids, and, once open, they seemed too lazy to shut them. The help of the father and the illustration fixed the truth of the lesson indelibly in the child's mind.

5. If not a teacher in the Sunday school, be present as often as possible. If you are never there, how can you make your children understand that it is a place of any importance? Once a month, at least, you ought to be a visitor.

6. Go to Church regularly. No matter if the minister or some member of the Church does not exactly suit you; go any how. Take your children along. Let them sit with you. Be attentive to the Word, speak favorably of the minister on your return home, inquire as to the text, amplify any unamplified point, and enforce the teachings. Do not undo all that has been done by thoughtless or cruel criticism.

7. Assist the pastor and the teacher in the specific work of teaching the doctrines of your Church; in other words, teach the Catechism to your children.

8. Provide proper reading-matter for your family. You are not indifferent as to your table; things wholesome and seasonable are carefully selected. Be as careful in selecting books such as will not only interest and excite, but as will afford healthy mental and moral development. Every household should be supplied with one or more of religious papers. Children should early form habits of regard for the Church, its literature, and all its movements. Many

a young man has been held in firm affection to the faith, has had habits of liberality established, from the fact that his father was a subscriber to the Church paper. Altogether, the most intelligent Church members, the foremost supporters of the ministry, are found among those who are the constant readers of the literature of their Church.

9. Contribute of your means to the purchase of books for the library, and to meet such expenses as are essential to a successful prosecution of the Sunday school work. Do not wait to be pressed by the superintendent or pastor. Find out for yourself, and be a willing, generous, regular contributor. No investment will yield better returns.

RETAINING THE OLDER SCHOLARS.

ANY grading system in a Sabbath school, except that which divides the infant class from the main school, will have a damaging effect upon its prosperity. There should be no first, second, or third divisions by which the Bible classes would belong to one, the older boys and girls to the second, and the young children to the third; neither should there be a special place in the school-room for adult classes; neither should the classes be numbered one, two, three, according to age; neither should the boys be placed on one side of the room and the girls on the other. All these arrangements tend to make those scholars who are neither children nor adults uneasy. All the appointments of the Sabbath school should be such as to render it impossible for a visitor to detect any division based upon rank or age. Let the classes of little scholars just from the infant room, of boys and girls, of young men and young women, of old men and old women, be

all mixed up in the room without order. This is one way to make all ages in the school feel at home. So writes a New York superintendent of large experience.

Another: the superintendent, in any remarks or announcements from the desk, should not use the word *children*; he should always say *scholars*. This would, of course, apply to all ages and would offend none. Scholars in their teens, in the transition stage from boys and girls to young men and young women, do not like to be called children. The superintendent would make just as bad a mistake if he should be in the habit of discriminating between the ages, and sometimes say *children* and sometimes *young men*. He has all ages to address, and it is quite difficult to know the precise time when a boy becomes a young man. Still, there are times when it is necessary to speak to young men, and to designate certain classes. He should always, in such cases, err on the safe side, and call a class of good-sized boys, young men. This has in it a little of the wisdom of the serpent, but it is a kind of wisdom which every superintendent should learn, if he would keep his large boys in the school. There are some superintendents who take special pains in conversing with boys, to call them young men before any others would think of doing so. In a certain school, the superintendent noticed that one of his classes, composed of boys of about sixteen years of age, was a little restive. He saw, at once, that the boys were beginning to feel a little too old to be in the Sabbath school. He resolved at once what to do, and took the first opportunity to speak of the class before the whole school as one of "young men." He watched the effect upon them. The boys turned and looked upon each other and nodded their heads with evident satisfaction, as much as to say, "we are young men." There was no trouble with that

class afterward. This plan will generally be found an effective remedy for the difficulty alluded to. Many a class of good-sized boys who are beginning to feel too old for the Sunday school, can be settled down into a state of perfect contentment by calling it a class of young men, and so recognizing it before the whole school.

A gentleman who has had a large Sunday school experience says, speaking of the Wesleyan Sunday schools in England:

The number of scholars above fifteen years of age is, on the whole, very encouraging. There are upward of ninety-three thousand, the proportion being above sixteen per cent. In the northern manufacturing counties the proportion rises very far above this average, amounting, at Bolton, for instance, to more than one-third of the whole number of scholars in attendance. The great secret of retaining scholars to a late age is to provide high organization, thoroughly competent and devoted teachers, and separate class-rooms for all the senior classes. With these conditions it is as possible to retain scholars far beyond the age of fifteen in the south of England as in the north, as is proved by the remarkable case of the schools at Sherburn, the organization and efficiency of which have been carried to so high a pitch under the intelligent, assiduous, and Christian superintendence of Mr. Dingley, continued during the last thirty years.

Wherever the children are retained at the schools to a late age, comparatively speaking—that is, to seventeen years and upward—it is found, as might be expected, that a large proportion of them are saved from going astray—are, in fact, gained as members of the Church. In those southern and midland districts, where very few scholars remain beyond the age of fourteen or fifteen, the proportion of Sunday scholars who are “members of society”—

members of the Church—falls as low as two or three per cent. In the Manchester district it rises to nearly nine per cent., and in the Halifax and Bradford to eleven per cent. It follows that the real usefulness, the Christian efficiency of a Sunday school, hinges on this point: the retention of the scholars till they become young men or young women; and this again, as we have said, depends on the quality and attainments of their teachers, and on the provision of separate class-rooms.

Mr. R. W. Raymond, superintendent of Plymouth Church Sunday school, Brooklyn, makes this suggestion:

Our Sunday school accessories are almost entirely calculated for the little people. We have little songs, and banners, and cake, and stories, and blackboards, and pictures, and spend much trouble to call into our schools and keep there the very class of pupils who are, of all, the easiest to interest and retain. It can not have escaped your notice that our scholars are attentive and faithful till they begin to be grown up, especially the boys, and that there is a great gap in our ranks between the ages of fifteen and twenty. Those who are too big for processions and refreshments, and not old enough to come thirsting for knowledge—as, thank God, many young men do—find little attraction. This want is met, in Plymouth school, by the Young People's Association, an independent organization, with its own officers, which supports the young people's prayer meeting, the young people's sewing circle, and the young people's lecture course, a series of familiar lectures on scientific topics of popular interest, accompanied with evening entertainments in the Sunday school room, enlivened by readings, recitations, and music.

Another writer of large teaching experience remarks:

1. Elevate the popular conception of the Sabbath school. Eradicate the idea that the Sabbath school is

primary, and chiefly a children's institution. It is a Bible school. It is the place for public, united, systematic study of God's Word, where minister and people, learned and unlearned, old and young, rich and poor, come together to "search the Scriptures."

2. Elevate the management of the Sabbath school. Adapt it to the tastes and needs of youths and adults, as well as children. In the selection of the library, in the character of the hymns, above all, in the conduct of the general exercises, recognize the fact that the youth and adults are not an appendage, but a coördinate and integral part of the school. Have no fear that the children will suffer thereby. Make the school one into which adults and youth shall put their enthusiasm, and you can not keep the children away.

3. Set the example. Let the minister be there; let the fathers and mothers come; let every member of the Church feel bound to attend the Sabbath school as fully as the prayer meeting; let it become entirely obvious that it is a great master purpose of the entire Church to learn for themselves and each other what God hath taught.

TEMPERANCE.

FROM returns carefully obtained from chaplains of the principal prisons in Scotland and England, it has been found that out of ten thousand inmates of prisons and penitentiaries, no fewer than six thousand had been Sabbath school scholars. In Edinburgh, out of 553 who were, in 1867, prisoners, it was found 399 had previously been attending the Sabbath school. The cause, at the close of the investigations, was easily assigned. The

teachers in the Sabbath school had said nothing in regard to the danger of drink—they had in many cases been users of wine and beer themselves, and the relapse into intemperance, and then into crime, was prompt. In our country statistics so appalling may not exist, but we have heard that in many of our State Reform schools there is quite a per cent. of inmates who were formerly connected with the Sabbath school, but who by drinking found their way thither. The facts in either case carry their own lesson, and warn every teacher of religion to guard well the hearts of the young against the terrible danger there is in yielding in the slightest degree to habits of intemperance. Nine-tenths of all the misery of the land is traceable to the drinking habits of society. Were, to-day, all men total abstainers, the condition of society would be immeasurably purer than it is, and revivals, instead of being periodical and local, would be all but universal and constant. In every school, therefore, we should have a temperance organization, every member of the school being requested to sign the temperance pledge.

The superintendent should frequently introduce the subject for the proper education of the young, that they may be taught to keep the body, which is the temple of God, pure.

When there is a good prospect of success, let there be formed a Juvenile Temperance organization, either by one school or the union of schools.

A Sunday school temperance medal or certificate might be given to every signer of the pledge.

In the organization of a society select some evening of the week or a Saturday afternoon. Let the chairman be one of the young men between fifteen and eighteen years of age; have some appropriate temperance hymns, an address from the pastor or superintendent, or a few

pieces recited by the boys, or an essay or two by the girls. Take all the names to the pledge you can secure, and appoint committees of young ladies and young gentlemen to secure signatures in their respective neighborhoods through the week. It is not necessary that the meetings should be continued regularly through the year, but at such times and for such periods as the largest number of attendants can be secured.

In some schools Bands of Hope are organized and successfully carried on. The following is the plan which has been found to work successfully in many places:

Invite the children of the neighborhood from the pulpit, by visiting the Sabbath and public schools about you or otherwise. At first there may be a little difficulty to get up your first meeting; but if it is well conducted and made interesting, there will be no difficulty in gathering future assemblies of the little ones. Open the meeting by singing some appropriate hymn; read a portion of Scripture—such, for instance, as the first chapter of Daniel; prayer, and then a few pointed remarks upon the importance of the movement and its object, with a short sketch of its progress and position elsewhere; sing another hymn, and then remarks by some discreet friend upon the necessity of children taking hold of Temperance principles in early life—interweaving among his observations a few pleasing stories illustrative of the beautiful influence of children; close by singing; and, if you can possibly arrange it, have at this, your opening meeting, your officers appointed for the ensuing year.

Every person on becoming a member shall take the following pledge: "I hereby solemnly pledge myself to abstain from the use of all intoxicating drinks, including wine, beer, and cider as a beverage; from the use of tobacco in every form, and from all profanity."

THE INSTITUTE.

[The ensuing paper we extract from a little work by Rev. Edward Eggleston, editor of the *Sunday School Teacher*, Chicago, Messrs. Adams, Blackner & Lyons, publishers, consenting to the same.]

WHILE there is great diversity of opinion in regard to the institute and the methods of conducting it, there are some things which have the indorsement of the majority of the best Sunday school workers.

1. The leader or conductor of an institute should be an instructor, should know the art of teaching, and should have his heart aglow with ardor in the work.

2. If the institute lasts over several days or nights vary the leader. Let one man occupy the forenoon, another the afternoon, a third the evening, a fourth the second morning, and so on. In large cities the institute succeeds best by ranging over a week of evenings.

3. Do not have too much apparatus or machinery. Let, however, a general outline or programme of the exercises be in the hands of all present, and let each member be liberally provided with blank paper and pencils, and note every valuable suggestion or idea. "Plumbago and foolscap," says some one, "are invaluable assistants on such an occasion." Have, also, a blackboard and a good map. For reference and model exercises have plenty of Bibles.

As a general rule, all institutes that contemplate frequent periodical meetings fail. Sometimes institute exercises are successfully combined with a teachers' meeting. A very common and successful form, at present, is the annual institute, in connection with a county convention or

otherwise. Training classes have done well for a while in several places. But there are other and quite as useful forms of institute work that might be introduced. Suppose that all the Churches in a city or village, or in a township or precinct, should agree to devote a week to the subject of Sabbath schools. Let it be called the Sunday school week; let sermons be preached on the Sabbath preceding relating to the Sunday school work; then let a programme of institute exercises be arranged for each evening in the week. Secure the services of the best and most practical workers for addresses, practice lessons, blackboard and map exercises. It might be a good plan to secure the services of an experienced Sabbath school worker from abroad to take charge of the institute, bringing in such help as he could secure from the community. Let the Saturday afternoon of the week be given to a children's meeting. Then close up the week by giving the succeeding Sabbath to the Sunday school, as follows: Morning hour, sermons in the different churches on Sabbath school subjects; afternoon, Sunday school concerts; evening, a union Sunday school meeting, with two or three animated addresses. If such a plan were well carried out, it could not fail to give a great impetus to the Sunday school work.

Almost all of our State and county conventions have institute exercises connected with their sessions. Sometimes a day, sometimes a half day is given up to such exercises, conducted by some one appointed for that purpose. In other conventions an hour or two hours of each session are devoted to such work. Perhaps, after all, the simplest form is the best. Let your institute exercises be interspersed with the discussions of the Convention. In this way the weariness that is apt to be produced by the close confinement to the institute work proper is relieved,

and greater freshness and animation given to all the exercises. Indeed, it is questionable whether an institute should ever be conducted without some season of free discussion after the convention style. Certainly, no convention should be held without institute exercises of some sort.

Exercises for institutes take a great variety of forms. A list of some of the most common ones is as follows: 1. Lectures; 2. Addresses; 3. Essays; 4. Drill exercises; 5. Map exercises; 6. Question drawer; 7. Answer drawer; 8. Practice lessons; 9. Model general exercises; 10. Model teachers' meetings; 11. Discussions; 12. Verbal questions.

Where a thorough, prepared lecture can be had from an able hand, it is exceedingly valuable. The only objection to such an exercise is that it keeps the attention strained without giving employment to the members of the institute, and should, therefore, be followed by some animated exercise as a relief to the institute. The lecture can be used to develop some general subject relating to Sunday school management and methods of teaching, or it can be made still more valuable in giving important Scriptural information. It is, however, liable to serious objections, and should not be used too frequently, and should be intrusted only to the best hands.

Addresses.—These can often be used to introduce a discussion—to explain a subject not easily exemplified by a model exercise—as, for instance, opening exercises, teachers' meeting, mission Sunday schools, etc. Indeed, very many subjects that are sometimes treated by practice lessons can be very profitably presented in the form of an address. It is not always convenient to have a class present, and, besides, a model lesson shows only one form of teaching, while an address presents the different forms and compares them.

Essays.—These, like lectures, should be used sparingly, still they are sometimes exceedingly valuable.

Drill Exercises.—These are usually given with a blackboard, but may be given without. Almost any subject relating to the art of teaching may be used, the principal heads developed by questioning the institute, which, for the time, is treated as a class. The questions will be answered by individuals, but their answers should be reduced to shape by the conductor, and then given in concert by the institute. If a blackboard is used, brief catch-words will be found best for recording the general heads. This is an exceedingly interesting exercise when well conducted, but requires tact and presence of mind, and should be undertaken cautiously.

Illustration of Drill Exercises.—In order to understand how a drill exercise is to be conducted, let us suppose the subject to be "*The Art of Gaining Attention.*" The conductor begins by asking what it is that excites a child's attention when he sees a strange piece of machinery? Some one answers, "Curiosity!" What makes a child wish to go to a show? A series of questions will follow, bringing out the fact that curiosity is one of the first principles of attention in a child, one of the strongest impulses in child nature. "What shall I write at the top of the list?" "Curiosity." The word is set down. In a similar manner a child's love of new things is brought out, and the word "novelty" is put down. Thus he goes through the list till he has a series of heads written on the board somewhat as follows: 1. Curiosity; 2. Novelty; 3. Imitation; 4. Animal Spirits, or Animation; 5. Comparison, or Illustration; 6. Object Teaching, etc.; 7. Imagination.

The above list is not complete, and it perhaps is not always best to complete the list. Get the most important particulars, but do not burden the memory. Then, again,

one who gives a drill exercise should make a practical application of the points by showing how they may be applied in giving a lesson. The institute should be so well trained that they can repeat the points after they are erased from the board. A drill exercise, in a manner similar to that shown above, may be given on any Scriptural subject, as well as any topic relating to the art of teaching.

The Question Drawer.—This consists in distributing slips of paper through the audience, and desiring them to write thereon questions which they desire to have answered. These questions are then collected and answered, either by some one appointed for the purpose, or by persons selected from the institute, or by any who may volunteer to answer them. The advantage of this exercise is that it shows just what an institute wants to know, and, if it follows other exercises, it shows just the points in regard to those exercises concerning which the members of the institute wish to be informed.

The Answer Drawer.—This is a name given to an exercise frequently used in institutes that is just the reverse of the question drawer. The conductor propounds a question to the institute—if he has a blackboard he writes it in their sight. The members of the institute are provided with slips of paper, and each one writes an answer and drops it into the drawer or hat. The conductor, or some one appointed by him, reads the answers, and then sums up the matter by a brief review of the subject.

Practice Lessons.—These are of the utmost importance, and those who conduct them should prepare carefully for the exercise. *They should be genuine lessons.* Do not take a class of adults and play at giving a lesson. There is always something of sham—of stage play in such an exercise. If you are to teach a model lesson, take scholars of the size you wish. You should by all means

have a good bright class, for your disadvantages are very great, and with a dull class you will fail to illustrate your point. Do not drill your class beforehand. Let it be a fair lesson in all respects. If you are to give an infant class lesson, have a class of about the usual size and number. Whatever your class may be, you must by all means avoid embarrassing them at the outset. Ask questions easily answered at the beginning. Let your first five minutes be devoted principally to reassuring them. It is an excellent plan to select the best infant class teacher in the place where the institute is held, and have her—or him—give a model lesson with her own class. Then have classes of other grades taught in the same way. If the lesson be a Bible-class lesson, the members of the class should be *bona fide* Bible-class scholars, and not the picked material of the institute. The object of him who teaches a practical lesson should not be to show how well he can teach, but to show the ordinary teacher how the every-day difficulties of his work can be treated and overcome. A class of adults is by all odds the most difficult to teach in presence of an audience.

Map Exercise.—This is very similar to a drill exercise, with the exception that a map is used instead of a blackboard. Very often the use of a blackboard is combined with the use of a map. Sometimes the blackboard is used alone. In this case, a map is constructed. It may just as well be a rude one as a minutely accurate one, and the institute is questioned while it is being put upon the board, and the prominent geographical facts impressed upon their minds.

Discussions.—It is always well to have some general discussion in an institute. There must not be too much, for in such case it becomes a mere convention; but it seems to us, that especially in county conventions, there

should be a blending of the two forms of exercises. Where it is appropriate, the discussion might relate to the subject of some exercise or address that has just preceded it.

Verbal Questions.—This exercise is simple, and animated, and often profitable. Ask some experienced Sabbath school worker to take the stand. Then let questions of interest to Sunday school teachers be propounded to him. Several of our prominent Sunday school workers have shown themselves exceedingly happy in such an exercise.

Take Notes.—Every member of an institute should be required to take notes of each exercise. It adds to the interest by keeping all employed; it enables those present to remember better, and it gives them valuable memoranda for future use.

Subjects for Lectures, Addresses, and Essays.—Training of Sunday school teachers; the art of illustrations; the preparation of a lesson; the teacher's spiritual preparation; the teacher's work; peculiarities of child-nature; the art of asking questions; object teaching; blackboard exercises; the superintendent; Sunday school literature; religious experience of children; children's meetings; teachers' meetings; the care and culture of converted children; the infant class; the Bible class; opening exercises, or general exercises; how to explain the Scriptures; exposition of the parables; the design of the Holy Scriptures; the historical books of the Bible; duty of the Church to the children; prophecy and the prophetic books; the miracles; the epistles; and other subjects relating to method and Scripture study.

Subjects for Drill Exercises.—Any of the topics given above for lectures or essays may be used as subjects for drill exercises, by putting down the points briefly on a

blackboard, and proceeding as before directed for such exercises. The following subjects will also be found to be adapted to drill exercises, and may also be used for addresses or essays :

How to interest children ; how to impress the memory ; how to impress the conscience ; how to gain the heart for Christ ; the object of Sunday school teaching.

A great variety of Scripture subjects may be used in drill exercises.

Subjects for Map Exercises.—These should relate to the central points of sacred geography. The memory should not be burdened with details.

The location of Palestine, with relation to the other countries of antiquity.

The physical structure of the Holy Land.

The River Jordan, with the Sea of Tiberias and the Dead Sea.

The location of the tribes.

Palestine in the time of our Savior.

The chief cities of the Bible.

The mountains of the Bible.

Jerusalem and its environs.

The journeys of Jesus.

The journeys of Paul.

The journeys of the other apostles.

The map may be used in a great variety of ways.

Outline Map Exercise—The River Jordan.—1. Begin by a brief mention of the prominent Scripture facts connected with the Jordan. 2. Point out the three sources, and have their names repeated once or twice by the institute in concert. 3. Point out the Lake Merom and the Sea of Tiberias, giving such topographical facts as you may have at command regarding the two bodies of water and the Jordan between ; then, by questions, recall these

facts from the institute. 4. Proceed in the same way with the Lower Jordan, giving its width, the rapidity of its current, distance from one sea to the other, the depression of the Dead Sea level, and recalling the points from the institute. 5. Then begin at the sources and proceed downward, having the institute name the localities and answer questions, and then reverse the process, beginning with the Dead Sea.

Keep in view evermore the spiritual impression to be made. Let the discussions be of such a nature as to keep the minds of the teachers close to the main object of their work.

THE CONGREGATIONAL INSTITUTE.

BY REV. J. M. REID, D. D.

THERE are plans for the improvement of Sabbath school instruction that, although *practicable*, are not *practical*: we mean that they *might* be worked, but they *will not* be. The mass of workers find them too delicate or difficult to operate them. It is well enough to provide on paper for a seminary for Sunday school teachers where they may go, as do candidates for the ministry to Biblical institutes, and by devotion to preparation become fully equipped for their important work; but who will attend these seminaries? We might better ask who *can* attend them? A normal institute for Sunday school teachers, on a basis similar to the normal schools, which are a part of our system of public instruction, seems to us impossible in practice. The imperative claims for a subsistence must forever preclude any considerable attendance

upon them, preparing as they do only for gratuitous work. Any plan to be generally successful, must not interfere very largely with the daily avocations of life.

Every suggestion of this kind, however, is the offspring of a felt need for higher culture in this department. The modes and appliances of Sunday school instruction, as well as the matter to be taught, claim a measure of qualification far too rare among Sunday school teachers. The wants of the age in this regard are voicing themselves forth in the numerous and varied plans proposed for all departments of the Sunday school. These projects are but cries for better teachers and better apparatus, filling the whole air and penetrating the whole Church. We shall be false to the hour if we do not give some practical response to them.

It has always seemed to us that the teachers of each Sunday school should of themselves be an institute, meeting weekly, under the supervision of the pastor, the natural president of the institute, or, when he is not at hand, under the superintendent. The entire school should pursue, in part or in whole, in one form or another, the *same* lesson, and that lesson should be carefully considered in this weekly meeting. This institute will therefore be the pastor's Bible class, or the pastor's week-night lecture; and even his pulpit work will not be more potential than might be these studies, rehearsed as they will be, and their moral lessons directly and personally reimpresed upon hundreds of lambs fed by a score of under shepherds. Not only may the Scripture lesson be thus studied, but all questions of method and order may, from time to time, be here discussed. The genuine institute, as we believe, is for each congregation. It will not be impossible for counties or States to bring these congregational institutes together for a day or two, once or twice a year, at some convenient

point, and the various experiences and opinions of the different schools may thus be contributed to the common stock of improvement. Even National conventions might occasionally be advantageous as making the methods and plans of each section and the great workers in this department every-where more generally known. All these, however, are but helps to the true institute. They are temporary expedients, simply impulses. The genuine fountain of living improvement must be bubbling up near to each altar and pulpit, and must flow out through every congregation. The institute, therefore, can only be a success as aided, and indeed led off, by the pastor.

Only regard for a moment some of the advantages of this arrangement; the pastor, the superintendent, the teachers, all would be prepared on the lesson; the preparation would be more thorough than it could otherwise be. The general examination upon the lesson before the assembled departments of the school, with blackboard, maps, pictures, or whatever else might illustrate it, would be more interesting. Pertinent and powerful applications of Gospel truth, arising from the lesson, might be then made in a few words of exhortation. The light and heat, instead of being only feeble scattered rays, would thus focalize themselves on some one point of revealed truth. The secret of this power would lie in the full preparation of all to work to one end.

The labors and sacrifices of the pastor, indispensable to this result, would be amply recompensed to himself in his own intellectual enlargement, and to the Church in incalculable advantages. We urge, therefore, the importance of the Congregational Institute for Sunday school teachers and officers.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY.

BY PROF. J. TUCKERMAN.

IN regard to sustaining Sabbath schools in rural districts there are peculiar difficulties, as well as peculiar advantages. These difficulties increase largely as the Winter approaches, and there is scarcely any abatement of them till Spring. The distance of the residence of many persons from the place of meeting, even though a Sabbath school should be maintained in every school district, exceeds that of nearly all living in a village or city. There are times when the roads are almost impassable—when the people remain at home for days and weeks, except in cases of great emergency. The works of necessity are much increased during this season. A large portion of the day must be appropriated to the labor of caring for flocks and herds. This renders a *morning session* exceedingly difficult. Moreover, at this season lectures, lyceums, protracted meetings, and other exercises so engage the attention and occupy the evenings as materially to interfere with successful labor in this direction.

And, besides this, there is *always* lacking the healthy stimulus of large numbers—the quick activities universally observed in large gatherings of business men—a very general absence of inspiring instrumental music, and a scarcity of men having self-confidence and experience in conducting the various exercises. These considerations will, in a measure, account for the fact that nearly two-thirds of the Sabbath schools in rural districts are suspended during the Winter months. Yet Sabbath schools, although first

commenced *in* and designed *for* cities and manufacturing districts, *have been* and *are* a wonderful success in less thickly populated sections. Every-where all children, and youth, and those of mature years need instruction in the Word of God in order that they may be brought to Christ, and built up in Christian faith, doctrine, character, and practices.

Some of the requisites for success in this field are, first, an appreciation of the importance and magnitude of the work to be done. Any man who undertakes to teach or superintend while he is laboring under the impression that it "does n't amount to much" will certainly fail unless his mind shall become changed upon that point. No one is pleased with unproductive toil or sacrifice, and it is essential to feel that we are doing important duty, and that we are able to do it with reasonable perfection, in order to beget the enthusiasm which will induce the second requisite; namely, *consecration*. It is not enough to commence with a feeling that "if the school or class goes along well I will go along with it." Eleven years ago some young men in one of the most important cities of Ohio commenced a morning prayer meeting. Two of these were talking over the matter upon the day of the first meeting, and were so impressed with the magnitude of the work and with their relations to it that they agreed with each other to continue to attend that meeting till they alone were left. They said, "When there are but two of us, then we will consider what it is best to do." The prayer meeting still lives. The names of those two men are honored wherever they are known. They commenced by a *consecration*—not public, but effectual—to the work.

No one man can do every thing. Men daily take their choice, both in reference to what they are to acquire and what they are to dispense, and to succeed as a

superintendent or teacher in a Sabbath school any person must *choose* to labor in this field, and *delight* in the duties connected therewith. A third requisite is *time* and *prayerful study*. If the work is important, and the man be consecrated to it, these certainly will be given. A fourth requisite is heroism in the execution of plans. This is especially needed when a new enterprise in this direction is commenced, or when some are beginning to ask "if it is n't about time to close up for the Winter," urging that it is best to close while the school is in good condition, as though there was a "good condition" for ceasing to give instruction in the Word of God. Frederick the Great once said, "I love the *lineage* of heroes, but I love *heroes* better." And, in the successful prosecution of this agency, there must be a wise and Christian heroism which will show, not merely the fact that what has been done can be done again, but the additional truth that Christian men can adapt themselves to the present wants and emergencies of society, and that they have the will, and, with God's blessing, the ability to meet the responsibilities, not of the *past*, but of the *present* age.

A few practical suggestions. Since the preaching of the present day is mainly *textual*, it is suggested that the Sabbath school be held in place of one of the regular Sabbath services, the entire congregation engaging in the study of a given portion of the Bible, and the pastor or superintendent giving an expository review at the close. This plan is now followed in several places in Ohio, and the results are uniformly pronounced good. It continues regular Biblical study on the part of the members of the congregation during the entire year, and they are thus enabled to search for Scriptural knowledge in company with each other. Relieving the minister from the preparation and preaching of one textual sermon each week, it affords

him an opportunity of varying his studies and labors, and of becoming more intimately and favorably acquainted with the youth of his charge.

The time for replenishing Sabbath school libraries should also receive attention. Ordinarily, this is done at the commencement of Spring. Would not the beginning of Winter be a better time, and would it not be wise to hold out extra inducements to secure increased membership when the attendance is usually smallest, and to expend extra strength in taking this child of the Church over the hard and rough places during the inclement season, instead of endeavoring to accelerate the motion down an inclined plane in Summer?

Again, superintendents and instructors in places remote from city influences have great encouragement to give special attention to the new and varied forms of presenting Biblical truth. As compared with city youth, they deal with minds less used to excitement, with less to divert from the consideration of spiritual interests, more accessible, more easily and quite as permanently influenced.

The success of their schools can not be measured by the beauty and splendor of their school-room—these are, for the most part, comparatively uninviting; nor by the costliness of their instruments of music—a majority of country schools are without these valuable soul-charmers; nor by the regularity and promptness with which an entire school answers to the tap of the bell, for very few, even of these, are to be found outside the city or village; but by the direct tendency of the instruction to change the springs of life so that they may all center in God, thus changing the character and destiny of men. Consecrated and well-directed labor for this purpose will ever be owned and blessed by the Master.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION.

THE object of the convention is to awaken an earnest and intelligent enthusiasm in the Sunday school work, to diffuse information in regard to the best methods of conducting Sunday schools and of teaching Sunday school classes, and to devise and organize means for Sunday school extension within the territory represented by the convention.

The officers should be men of tact, decision, Sunday school experience, and possessors, in some degree, of a knowledge of the usages of deliberative assemblies. Let a half hour be given, at the opening of each session, to devotional exercises.

Let each convention have a children's meeting, and, if possible, some children's prayer meetings in connection with it, the latter in the morning.

Avoid foreign subjects in all discussions. Adhere inflexibly to the objects of the convention, and let the president kindly but firmly hold each speaker to the subject immediately in hand, and not to any and every thing that may chance to present itself for discussion.

Have somebody as singer who can drink in the spirit of the convention, and who, at proper intervals, and with no loss of time, can lead the convention in an appropriate verse. Too much singing, of course, is an evil, but too little is a worse one.

In the Appendix we give in detail the views of Rev. Edward Eggleston, who is one of our ablest Sunday school workers, and who thoroughly understands the theory and practice of the Sunday school convention.

SPECIMEN LESSONS.

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“HOW would you teach a Bible or an intermediate class?” is a question perpetually asked. One way of answering might be by advising the inquirer to visit the best schools or classes, and observe the methods pursued there; another might be to note the peculiarities, defects, or excellencies of published lessons, given either in outline or in full. Those below do not claim to be models, but may serve as suggestions and hints to such teachers as desire to discover in what respect they themselves are inferior or superior to other teachers.

GOD THE DELIVERER OF HIS PEOPLE.

BY CHARLES H. WOLFF.

As introductory to the lesson let it be observed:

1. To teach *successfully* is to *interest* those taught.
2. To do this, there must be *variety* in the subjects presented.
3. Bible-class teaching should be *religious instruction*, and in no case should the teacher permit it to degenerate into mere *metaphysical inquiry*, or *curious analysis*.
4. A *thorough acquaintance with the mental and moral condition of those taught* is very desirable, and to insure the *desired result* is absolutely necessary.

5. The *conversion of sinners*, and the *upbuilding of Christians* should be the objects of the teacher, and *should never be lost sight of*.

6. While *questions should be asked*, and *answers given by both teacher and scholars*, this should never degenerate into immoderate discussion; and, generally, the lesson should be *so thoroughly explained* as to make further inquiry unnecessary, unless the matter be resumed *individually at home*. The latter the teacher should especially encourage.

7. The *preparation of the lesson* should comprise:

(1.) The careful reading of it.

(2.) *Specific prayer*, bearing directly on the lesson itself.

(3.) Ascertain the leading *topic*, and prepare especially with reference to it.

(4.) Closely study a *good Commentary*, and carefully note on paper *difficult points*.

(5.) Compare *parallel passages in the Bible*, and *determine those* to be used in the lesson.

(6.) Comprehend thoroughly the *chronology and geography of the lesson* wherever it occurs.

(7.) Keep a *scrap-book of illustrations*, and choose from it *carefully those best adapted* to the lesson under consideration, and introduce, wherever practicable, lessons or illustrations from *your own life*, and those from *authentic history*.

(8.) Make the lesson *terse*, boiling down, as it were, *great voluminous truths* into the small compass of a *clear essence*.

THE LESSON.

1 SAMUEL vii, 1-12.

VERSE 1. *Kirjath-jearim*. Was on or near the boundary line of Judah and Benjamin; in 2 Samuel vi, 2, it is called a city of Judah. It was the birthplace of

Urijah the prophet—Jeremiah xxvi, 20; Eleazar, 1 Samuel vii, 1.

Here use the map, and refer to Joshua xviii, 28; xv, 9-60; 1 Chron. xiii, 6.

VERSE 2. *The Ark.* Explain its structure and object. It was God's dwelling-place. Its relation to *the Tabernacle. The Holy of Holies.*

VERSE 3. *Refers to Idolatry.* Strange gods and Ash-taroath. One of the principal idols. Here give an outline history of it. Also called *the Queen of Heaven*, probably the Moon. Placed on a car, etc. *Baalim*, the Sun.

VERSE 5. *Mizpeh.* "Post of Observation." Located two miles from Jerusalem, in the tribe of Judah.

Samuel dwelt there.

Saul was anointed king there.

The Jews often resorted to this place for *business and devotion.*

Rebuilt after the return from Babylon. Neh. iii, 19.

VERSE 6. "*And fasted on that day.*"

VERSE 7. "*The Lords of the Philistines.*" *The Rulers. The Leaders.*

VERSES 8, 9. *Prayer and Sacrifice.*

VERSE 10. *God's answer in the thunder.*

VERSE 11. *Beth-car, or Beth-shan, or Beth-shean.* On the borders of Galilee and Samaria, on the edge of the great plain of Jordan. It was probably a possession of the Philistines, but was afterward attached to Judah.

VERSE 12. "*Shen.*" "*Ebenezer*"—stone of help.

TOPICS.—God will deliver his people when they do their whole duty.

He does it, too, when after sinning they earnestly repent in prayer and sacrifice before the Lord.

"When a man's ways please the Lord he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him."

After being delivered from our enemies we should praise the Lord for it.

We should raise our Ebenezer—our monument of thanksgiving to the Lord.

INCIDENTAL TOPICS.—Defeat and humiliation often precede and lead to earnest repentance. The Philistines had become a great scourge to Israel.

The influence of a good man. When "Samuel spake to the house of Israel," they took his counsel. Verse 3.

1. Repentance and fasting. Verse 6.

2. The prayers of the righteous Samuel for the people. Verse 8.

3. Prayer and sacrifice blended. Verse 9.

CHRIST'S WALKING ON THE SEA.

THIS lesson, illustrative of the pictorial form of Bible class instruction, was given with a class of six scholars, girls, at the Michigan State Sunday School Convention, Coldwater, in 1867, by Rev. EDWARD EGGLESTON. The lesson was in Matthew's Gospel, 14th chapter, 22d and 33d verses. After announcing chapter and verse, the scholars were requested to turn to the place, and the instruction began.

Teacher. Will you please read the first verse?

1st Scholar. "And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away."

T. Who constrained his disciples?

S. Jesus.

T. What did He constrain them to do?

S. To get into a ship.

T. Why did He get them into a ship?

S. To go to the other side.

T. Did Jesus go with them?

S. No, sir; the disciples went before Him.

T. What is meant by straightway?

S. Right away.

T. Yes, right off. What did Jesus do while the disciples were going to the other side?

S. He sent the multitudes away.

T. Second scholar, twenty-third verse, please?

2d S. *"And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come he was there alone."*

T. Who went up into the mountain?

S. Jesus.

T. What did He go into the mountain for?

S. To pray.

T. What word is used to indicate that he went alone?

S. Apart.

T. Yes, apart, separate from others. Twenty-fourth verse, next.

3d S. *"But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary."*

T. What was in the midst of the sea?

S. The ship.

T. What took place?

S. The ship was tossed with the waves.

T. Why was it tossed with the waves?

S. The wind was contrary.

T. What do you understand by the wind being "contrary?"

S. It blew against them, the wrong way.

T. Next verse?

4th S. *"And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea."*

T. Next verse?

5th S. *"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear."*

T. What was the reason they were troubled?

S. They thought it was a spirit.

T. What word do we commonly use for spirit in such a case?

S. Ghost.

T. Yes; we shall not stop here to inquire what a spirit is. You know what your soul is as well as any body can tell you. How did the disciples express their fear?

S. They cried out.

The remainder of the lesson was read through like questions being asked on each.

"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid.

"And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

"And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

"But when he saw the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me!

"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

"And when they were come unto the ship the wind ceased.

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God."

The last verse was read in concert by the class.

T. You can now keep your Bibles open if you desire. We want to get the lesson before us now in such a shape and form that we may remember it. Many artists have painted this Bible scene on canvas. If I were an artist, and had come to you for help, what is the first picture, the first scene contained in the lesson as we have read and explained it, that you would have me paint? Let us see now whether we can not paint several pictures from this lesson that we may hang up in the galleries of our minds. What is the first scene described in the text?

S. The disciples going away, and the multitude leaving Jesus alone.

T. Very well. Suppose we call it, then, "Jesus sending the disciples and the multitude away." Where would the disciples be?

S. In the ship.

T. Where the ship?

S. Near the shore.

T. Yes, just pushing out from the shore, while Jesus would be where?

S. On the shore, sending the multitude away.

T. Very well. Repeat the title of the first picture all together, if you please?

Class. "Jesus sending his disciples and the multitude away."

T. Very well. What shall we have for our second picture? What did Jesus do when his disciples and the multitude had gone?

S. Went into a mountain apart to pray.

T. What picture would we have then?

S. Jesus in the mountain praying.

T. Exactly. Any one with him?

S. No, sir; he was alone.

T. Then we may say, as our title, "Jesus in the mountain praying alone," may we not? What a beautiful picture it is! Could there be a more impressive one painted? What time of day was it?

S. The fourth watch of the night.

T. That was toward morning; the darkest hour of the day, perhaps, just before dawn. What was the first picture? (Class repeats.) What the second? (Repeats.) Now, what took place with the disciples in the ship while Jesus was on the mountain praying alone?

S. They were tossed on the sea.

T. Yes, the ship was tossed by the waves. What time was it?

S. Just before morning, in the darkest hour of the night.

T. Then I suppose we ought to paint the background of our third picture as black as we can get it; and what should we put in the foreground?

S. "A ship tossed by the waves."

T. Yes; this, then, is the title of our third picture. What is the first? (Class repeats.) The second? (Repeats.) The third? (Repeats.) What do we next see?

S. Jesus walking on the water.

T. Very well. Would you have any thing else? How about the disciples in the ship?

S. They were frightened.

T. Yes, and we must represent them with pale, blanched faces, full of terror, as in the storm they see what, to them, is like a specter or a ghost walking on the billows. "Jesus walking on the water" is, then, our fourth picture. What is the first? The second? The third? The fourth? (Class repeats.)

In like manner two more pictures are drawn, "Peter sinking, Jesus saving," and "The sea calm, all safe in the ship worshipping Jesus."

T. Now, the lesson has a prominent doctrine in it, something which it is its main design to teach. What great truth shall we learn as the central one of the narrative, the one for which the event seems to be recorded? (A pause.) Is it not expressed by the disciples and the crew of the ship when they found the storm abated and Jesus with them after he had saved the sinking Peter? What did "they that were in the ship" say?

S. "Of a truth, thou art the son of God."

T. What, then, is the doctrine taught here?

S. The sonship and the divinity of Jesus.

T. Very well. The divinity of Jesus Christ. Could any one not divine walk upon the water and keep others up who were attempting to do it?

S. No, sir.

T. Right enough. A foolish man once attempted it, but the arrangement he had attached to his feet slipped, and his feet went up and his head down, making it necessary for the help near at hand to come to his rescue. Nothing but divine power could thus set aside nature's laws.

Now we want to get something besides the great doctrine thus taught, out of our lesson—something that shall be useful to us every day of our lives—something that we may always remember and profit by. Let us see what duties we may find laid down for us. We will not look at all our pictures, but to two or three. What was our second picture?

S. "Jesus in the mountain, praying, alone."

T. What do we learn from it?

S. The duty of prayer.

T. What kind of prayer?

S. Prayer in private. Secret prayer.

T. Yes, secret prayer. Say it together. The first lesson is—

S. "The duty of secret prayer."

T. Now let me come to a question belonging further on in the lesson. Do you think it was right for Peter to attempt to walk on the water? It is a difficult question for you to answer, but express yourselves with perfect freedom and frankness.

S. (Some, "No, sir;" some, "Yes, sir.")

T. Well, the audience before us would probably be equally divided on the bare question. But let us go back a little. Who told Peter to walk on the water?

S. Jesus.

T. Very well ; ought we not to do as Jesus tells us ? Was not Peter right, therefore ?

S. Yes, sir.

T. Let us see a little further. Was there any need of Peter's going into danger ? Could not Peter have been sure that it was Jesus without such a test as he requested from him ? He ought to have been satisfied, perhaps, without the necessity of his going into any peril. Jesus sometimes permits his own children to do things that are not right, nor best for them, to show them their weakness, and wherein they are wrong. Peter soon saw his mistake when he began to sink and to call upon the Lord to save him. We ought not to be fool-hardy, nor to go into temptation without we have a good object in view ; something for the good of others, or the glory of God. Suppose I was to go into the crater of a volcano, would I be doing right ?

S. No, sir,

T. Unless I had a duty to perform there, no. If you or I, or any one should go to the theater, or any other place of wickedness, would we be doing right ?

S. No, sir ; unless we had a duty there.

T. So then we should not go into places of temptation or sin without we have a duty, an object such as the saving of souls, the glory of God, in view. This, then, we make a second lesson out of our subject : "Not to go into temptation when there is no need of it." What did Jesus say to Peter ?

S. "Come !"

T. What does Jesus say to you and to me ?

S. "Come !"

T. Yes. All Christ's miracles have a meaning in them, for all the world. This one has a meaning for you and for me. It is, "Come." Come to whom ?

S. "Come to me."

T. Yes; come to Jesus. When?

S. Now.

T. Yes; now, all the time. Can we not put this precious lesson into three words? Who will do it for us?

Class. ("Jesus says, Come;" "Come to Jesus," are replies given.)

T. Beautiful lesson! O, we need all to learn it and to do it, every day. Now, when Peter got out on the waves, why did he fear?

S. The waves were high.

T. At what do you suppose he was looking?

S. At the waves.

T. At what do you each one think he should have been looking?

S. At Jesus.

T. Yes! So when we begin to fear difficulties in coming to Jesus, where must we look?

S. At Jesus.

T. Ah, yes. Not having our eye on Jesus has made many to grow faint and sink without reaching him. The lesson we will draw from this, then, is, "Keep your eye on Jesus, all the time," and do not mind difficulties in coming to him. Peter began to sink. Is that not a description of our case? Are we not sinking? In what are we sinking?

S. In sin.

T. Yes. What did Peter say when he found himself sinking?

S. "Lord, save me!"

T. What should we say when we are sinking in sin?

S. "Lord, save me!"

T. Then, we are sinking in sin, and need salvation. This shall be our next lesson. (The four lessons were

repeated by the class.) What did Jesus do when Peter called on him?

S. "Stretched forth his hand" to save him.

T. What will Jesus do for us if we call on him?

S. He will save us.

T. From what?

S. From sinking in sin.

T. On what condition? (A pause.) Did Peter believe that Jesus could save him?

S. Yes, sir.

T. That he would save him?

S. Yes, sir.

T. He trusted in Him, then, did he not?

S. Yes, sir.

T. What is trust called in the Bible?

S. Faith.

T. On what condition, then, will Jesus save us?

S. If we have faith in Him.

T. *When* will He save us? When did He save Peter?

S. Now. Immediately.

T. Then our last lesson shall be, "Jesus will save us, *now*, if we trust him."

I trust, my dear young friends, that you will feel that the lesson is for each one of you. We have not brought you here before the Convention merely to exhibit a method of teaching, but to do you good. O, take to yourselves the lessons we have tried to draw from the beautiful Bible incident we have been considering. Dear young friends, each of you, Come to Jesus; keep your eye on Jesus, all the time; he will save you, *now*, if you trust him. We are sinking in sin, and need salvation; O, let us all say with Peter, "Lord, save me!" It is a short prayer, but one you can all say, "*Lord, save me!*"

FALSEHOOD.

W. S. BLACKET, author of a treatise on the capabilities and management of adult classes, has had a large experience as teacher in Sunday schools. His usual practice is to ask six or eight questions, usually the latter number, involving the main features of the lesson, specially, if the lesson were a doctrinal one. A verse, or a number of verses, or a chapter, or portions of two or more chapters might be selected as a foundation for the lesson. Below we furnish a sample of his method, having amplified it from an outline furnished. The subject is Falsehood.

1. *What are the different classes of falsehood?*

Unintentional Untruth—Lies—Prevarication—Equivocation—Treachery. (*Explain each.*)

Observation.—Degree does not affect criminality.

Illustration.—Eve and the forbidden fruit.

2. *What proves falsehood vicious?*

The ninth commandment—Ditto expanded on the principle of the Sermon on the Mount—The damage done—What is not willful is not criminal.

Observation.—Not to gloss over the guilt by the name of stratagem.

Illustration.—In the early days of the Roman Senate it was customary for fathers to take their sons to the Senate-house when any thing important was under discussion, in order that they might the sooner become familiarized with public affairs. A father whose name was Papirius took his son on one of these occasions, while a matter of considerable moment was pending, and, it having been advisable to adjourn the debate unto the morrow, an injunction of secrecy was laid upon all who were present. The mother of young Papirius wished to know what had

passed in the Senate, but the boy, unwilling to betray the secrets of that assembly, amused his parent by telling her that it had been debated whether it would be more advantageous to the Republic to give two wives to one husband, or two husbands to one wife. The mother of Papirius was alarmed, and she communicated the secret to the other Roman matrons, and on the morrow they assembled in large numbers before the Senate-house, bathed in tears, and earnestly entreating that one woman might have two husbands rather than one husband two wives. The Senators were astonished at so singular an application, but young Papirius explained the cause, and the fathers, in admiration of his stratagem, passed a decree that for the future boys should not be allowed to come to the Senate with their fathers, except Papirius alone. This regulation continued till the time of Augustus, who rescinded it.

3. *Is the tendency to falsehood natural to man?*

What do we learn from the conduct of childhood? Is truth a rarity? What learned from heathen practices? Do missionaries find the Chinese and other pagan nations truth-tellers?

Observation.—What dishonor has the fall brought upon man!

Illustration.—Lines from Young, Night i, 68—"How poor, how rich, how abject," etc.

4. *What instructive cases of falsehood are there in the Bible?*

Jacob—Spies—Gehazi—Ananias and Sapphira—Joseph and his brethren—Peter.

Observation.—The better the character the greater the sin.

Illustration.—Telemachus, Book xviii, page 144, in his description of his descent into the regions of Tartarus, says: The first objects that met my gaze were the impious

hypocrites who, affecting a zeal for religion, played upon the credulity of others, and gratified their own ambition. The child who had murdered his parents, the wife who had imbrued her hands in a husband's blood, and the traitor who had sold his country in violation of every tie were punished with less severity than these. Hypocrites are not content to be wicked upon the common terms: they would be vicious with the reputation of virtue, which is at length found to be false; they prevent mankind from putting confidence in the true.

5. *Are falsehoods justifiable for good purposes?*

Case; as, for instance, Fallacious arguments in debate—Assumed sanctity for an example—False miracles for conviction—False news to relieve the aching heart—Misleading a man who intends crime.

Observation.—Gospel morality higher than human maxims.

Illustration.—Opinions of Platonists and Pythagoreans, who made the State occupy the place of God, who affirmed that the duties of citizenship are paramount to religion, who declared that the praises or disgraces attached by the magistrate should stand for the blessings or cursings of the final award.

6. *What is the best way to get over a falsehood?*

Add falsehood to falsehood? Swear to it? Get into a rage? Bribe? Confess it?

Observation.—We should pass through life on the principle that all we do is seen.

Illustration.—A maker of dies lived in a town where a band of counterfeiters had been arrested, and for fear the people might suspect him of illegitimate moldings, he had his ground-glass windows taken out, and panes of clear plain glass inserted instead. "I am engaged in honest labor," was his remark, "and I wish my neighbors

to know that I am not afraid of their eyes or the eyes of officers."

7. *What are the common effects of falsehood?*

To pollute the mind of the utterer—to burden his heart—to disturb his conscience—to draw on punishment.

Observation.—Wickedness swells by practice.

Illustration.—Spectacles among the Romans were, in the earlier ages, comparatively bloodless. The actors engaged in feats of racing, wrestling, boxing, pitching, or shooting, were citizens of the Commonwealth. As the ages progressed, *gladiatorial* contests were introduced—at first, exhibitions of manly strength and endurance, then contests of bloodshed and death. So corrupt Roman morals at last became, that unless blood was drawn, or death closed the scene, the rabble were unsatisfied. Captives taken in war were compelled to fight each other and wild beasts in the Roman amphitheater, for the amusement of the spectators; and the Coliseum still attests the popularity of these bloody games. The extent of their enormities may be imagined from the single fact that, in the celebration of Trajan's triumph over the Dacians, they continued successively one hundred and twenty-three days. During this time 11,000 beasts were killed, and 10,000 gladiators were engaged in mutual wounds and slaughter.

In some cities men were penned, and fed, and trained by the thousand for the express purpose of making "holidays." The historical evidence is irrefutable, that in one city alone—Capua—forty thousand men were so kept, and taught how best to do the work of butchering, so that the greatest number of people could be gratified. The lines of Byron are well known:

"I see before me the gladiator lie;
He leans upon his hand; his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,

And his drooped head sinks gradually low ;
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
 Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now
 The arena swims around him ; he is gone
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won ;
 He heard it, but he heeded not ; his eyes
 Were with his heart, and that was far away ;
 He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize ;
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday."

11. *How does the Gospel rectify the habit?*

By its direct precepts—by its restraints—by its gracious assistance.

Observation.—A Christian's principles make him quick to detect and avoid iniquity.

Illustration.—Like the hen: to the eye of man there is but a slight difference between the fox and the fox-dog ; but the hen never mistakes them. The approach of the dog alarms her not ; but she is seized with horror the instant that the fox appears.

The sense of temptation in the Christian is keen, he is quick to avoid it. He tampers not with it ; but on the principle of the apostle, he avoids the very appearance of evil—detects it, and shuns it at the same instant.

The number is large of those who follow a course somewhat similar to that observed by Mr. BLACKET. Many place the leading propositions on a large blackboard in front of the class, so that all the time the lesson is in progress the eye acts its part as assistant. The chief objection to the method is its tendency to the sermonic or lecture style ; that is, it makes the teacher do too much, the class too little.

PETER'S SERMON ON REPENTANCE.

THE following is a sample of the lessons furnished for each Sabbath in the month by the Sunday School Teacher, Chicago. It will be observed that in the paragraph marked "Studies for Adult Classes," is afforded a fine opportunity to induce the study of the lesson at home by the scholars. For instance, let these "studies" be assigned to the class on the Sabbath preceding the hearing of the lesson. Two or three members could take the points of resemblance between Moses and Christ; two or three others the Prophecies concerning Christ. Let those to whom these subjects are assigned bring written notes of the result of their investigations, and let them or the teacher read them to the class. By alternating in the assignment of members of the class, all will be interested.

SCRIPTURE LESSON—ACTS III, 19-26.

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began,

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"*Repent ye therefore, and be converted.*" Acts iii, 19.

CENTRAL THOUGHT.—"*Repentance.*"

TOPIC FOR MEDITATION.—"*Sins blotted out.*"

ANALYSIS.—I. *Repentance*.—Having told the people their sins in the former part of the discourse, Peter exhorts them to repent, that their sins may be blotted out, and that times of refreshing *may* come.

II. He then speaks of the second coming of Christ, and shows from the prophets the divine mission of Jesus, and the judgments which God will send upon those who refuse to receive his word.

ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS.—I. What is it to be converted? See first and last verses of the lesson. What is meant by “blotting out” sins? What by “times of refreshing?”

II. Whom shall God send? What did Moses say of Jesus? What should happen to those who refused to hear him? To whom was the Gospel preached first? How did Peter say that Jesus should bless them? Can any greater blessing be given to a man to turn him away from his iniquities?

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS.—Have you repented of your sins against the Savior? Have you been converted? Have your sins been blotted out? Have the times of refreshing come upon your heart? Have you been turned from your iniquities?

EXPOSITORY NOTES.—Peter’s boldness and quick decision of character, if a disadvantage sometimes, stood him well in hand at others, and, in the present instance, he showed a knowledge of how to use his opportunity. The crowd gathered to see the man who had been healed afforded him a good audience. He first reproved them for thinking that the man had been healed by any power residing in them, or any meritorious piety—so the word rendered holiness means—of their own. He then speaks of the God of Abraham, etc., to conciliate their Jewish prejudices, but, if he conciliates them, he does not shun

their sinfulness in all its frightful enormity. Prince of life is rendered, by the best critics, "Author of life." Peter then shows his kindness of feeling by calling them "brethren."—*Lange*. He had begun by calling them "men of Israel," but now he appeals to their hearts. He admits the extenuation of their guilt, that it was done in ignorance. He shows the fulfillment of prophecy, and appeals to them to repent. "Conversion is put first when a man's recovery from sin and return to his right mind is meant; it is put after repentance when the uniting of the penitent to God is meant. See chapter xxvi, 20, and Jer. xxxi, 19."—*Bengel*.

Blotted out.—As a document that is obliterated. *When times of refreshing*.—All the best authorities read "that the times of refreshing may come." The allusion is to the breeze of the New Testament, full of grace.—*Bengel*. Peter next presents the prophecy of Moses concerning Christ—Deut. xviii, 15, 18, and 19—and the predicted punishment of those who refused to hear him. On the other hand, he goes back immediately to the covenant of Abraham, and shows them, in plain and forcible terms, how hopeful is their case.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.—*Lessons*.—1. Repentance; 2. We may have our sins blotted out; 3. If we repent, times of refreshing will come; 4. The greatest blessing we can have is to be turned from our iniquities; 5. The danger of refusing Christ.

Incidental Lessons.—1. Strength from Christ; 2. Perfect soundness through faith in his name; 3. God often accomplishes his designs by means of the wicked acts of men.

STUDIES FOR ADULT CLASSES.—1. Points of resemblance between Moses and Christ; 2. The prophecies concerning Christ; 3. What is conversion.

Use the blackboard by asking the school to name all the sins they think of. Then appeal to their consciences as to which they have committed. Speak of their balefulness. Ask if they would not like them rubbed out. Erase them and write "Pardon," and speak of Christ's blood blotting out, etc.

In giving the lesson to an infant class, teach by the numerical method the following things. (The numerical method is by counting the points and recalling them by points; as, "What is the first thing Peter told them?" "What the second?" etc.) Peter told them to do two things: 1. Repent; 2. Be converted. Explain both. Peter told them that if they did repent and were converted two things should happen: 1. Their sins would be blotted out; 2. Times of refreshing would come.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

REV. JOSEPH ALDEN, D. D., LL. D., well known as a writer on moral and intellectual science, has prepared a brief text-book, whose object is to aid in systematizing the ethical teachings of the pulpit and Bible class, and thus furnish occasion for discussions concerning duty more consecutive than when a portion of the sacred text forms the subject of the lesson. Its object is in part, also, to point out the coincidences between the teachings of the Bible and the sound conclusions of reason. Below is a sample:

1. *Why is it our duty to study the Word of God?*

God has written a book for our benefit; hence it is our duty to study it, and to seek to derive from it all the benefit it was intended to convey.

2. *What peculiar knowledge does the Word of God give us?*

The Bible makes known to us truths concerning God which we could never learn from nature, nor from the highest exercise of reason.

3. *Mention some of these truths.*

The Bible assures us that God is just, and good, and merciful; makes known to us the way in which pardon can be obtained; it also makes known to us a future life, and the preparation needed for that life.

4. *Does not nature teach that God is just, and good, and merciful?*

The teachings of nature are not uniform. We see many examples of justice and goodness, and we often see what looks like a want of justice and goodness. In order that we may be sure that a man is perfectly just, all his actions must be just. If some of his actions are just and some are unjust, we can not conclude that he is a perfectly just man. If some of his actions seem to be unjust, that unfavorable seeming must be removed before we can conclude that he is perfectly just.

5. *State another reason why the Bible should be studied.*

The Bible should be studied because it has a tendency to develop and purify all our powers.

6. *Does the study of the Bible improve our intellectual powers?*

It is a mistake to suppose that the Bible tends to improve our moral powers only. It has a tendency to improve our intellectual and social, as well as our moral powers.

7. *How are our powers improved?*

All our powers are improved by exercise. The Bible has a tendency to exercise all our powers, and, hence, to improve them.

8. *What books are most profitable for study?*

The books which are most profitable for study are not those which convey the largest amount of information, but those which are instinct with power. In studying the work of a superior mind the mind of the student comes

in contact with the mind of the writer, and receives a portion of his power.

9. *With what mind does the student of the Bible come in contact?*

In studying the Bible the mind comes in contact with the Divine mind. If to bring the mind in contact with a powerful human mind be productive of benefit, much greater benefit must result from bringing it in contact with the Divine mind.

10. *What is the great object of the Bible?*

The great object of the Bible is to restore the soul to its original perfection. That the soul may be perfect, all its powers must be fully developed.

11. *Does the study of the Bible develop the power of perceiving and enjoying beauty?*

There are in the Bible many passages of unequalled beauty and sublimity, the study of which furnishes exercise to that power.

12. *Does the study of the Bible develop the imagination?*

The imagery of some of the Hebrew prophets, and the visions of St. John in the Revelation, furnish the highest exercise to the imagination.

13. *What effect has Bible study on the affections?*

The Bible is adapted to purify and exalt our affections. It makes the exercise of love pervade all our duties. It sets before our affections an object of perfect loveliness in the character of our Heavenly Father.

14. *What is the Bible perfectly adapted to form?*

The Bible is perfectly adapted to form wisdom, strength, and beauty of character—to render us perfect men in Christ.

15. *What rules of interpretation should be used in studying the Bible?*

The Bible should be studied with reverence, but the same rules of interpretation should be applied to it as to

other books. We are to search the Scriptures. To honest and vigorous exercise of mind there should be added prayer for divine illumination.

16. *What is the relation between the doctrines and the precepts of the Bible?*

The doctrines of the Bible are to its precepts what the principles of arithmetic are to its practical rules. The doctrines are the principles whence the precepts are drawn.

17. *What should accompany the study of the Bible?*

Devout meditation and prayer should accompany the study of the Bible. That its truths may be influential in directing our actions and molding our characters, the attention of the mind must be long and steadily directed to them.

THE SHORTNESS AND VALUE OF TIME.

OBJECT LESSON.

"How short my time is." PSALM lxxxix, 47.

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." EPH. v, 16.

OBJECT—A WATCH, OR OTHER TIME-PIECE.

DESCRIBE the watch, hour-glass, sun-dial, or clock, and show their use in indicating the passage of time, enabling us to give the requisite portion to each duty of the day.

Time is a possession in which all are equally rich, the smallest child with the greatest man. We have but a single moment at once—the past is gone forever from us, the future belongs to God, the present moment is all that we can surely count upon. The next may find us in eternity. The "silver cord" may be "loosed" or the "golden bowl broken," the "pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern," and we

shall have passed away. Eccle. xii, 6. No wonder the Psalmist exclaimed, "How *short* my time is!" Even if we should live to old age it would still be very short in the sight of the Lord, with whom "a thousand years are as one day." 2 Peter iii, 8.

In the royal bed-chamber of a stately palace a dying queen cried, in the agony of her soul, "Millions of money for a few minutes of time!" But it was in vain. She died unprepared for death. See, then, dear young friends, the *value* of this precious gift of God; and try to *redeem* it. One meaning is to be so faithful in its improvement as to make up, so far as it is possible to do so, for the foolish and wicked manner in which much of the time already gone has been spent. Another is, because the days in which you live are so evil, make the most of your opportunity, or "buy the opportunity" for doing good, redeem it as the merchant would redeem a valuable article of merchandise, which he had in some way sacrificed, or a business privilege. When the Epistle to the Ephesians was written, it was a time of great persecution, and Christians were in danger every hour. They could not tell how soon affairs might be worse. So it is with us. We know not how soon our health and strength may be gone, or our life, and so our opportunity. Hence we should redeem the time, using every moment to the best possible advantage.

POINTS IN THE LESSON.

1. *Time is fleeting.* It is passing rapidly, or flying as if borne on wings. Hence it seems so short. "Time is painted with a lock before, and bald behind, signifying thereby that we must take time—as we say—by the forelock, for when it is once passed there is no recalling it."

2. *It is precious.* Each minute has been likened to a thread of gold in value. It is said that Nero used to

shoe his horses—very foolishly, we should say—with gold. It is as great folly in us to spend our time in silly talk or trifling actions.

3. *We must improve it now.* “Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” 2 Cor. vi, 2. To-morrow may find you in another world. “Some time ago a ship was lost at sea; it was called the Central America. On the evening before the captain hailed another ship, and, stating the dangerous condition he was in, implored help. ‘Send all your passengers and crew on board my ship,’ was the reply. But the captain of the Central America, thinking his vessel would not go down awhile yet, sent back the message, ‘Lie by me till morning.’ The morning came, and the kind-hearted sailors strained their eyes in looking for the disabled ship, but in vain. The Central America, with all its passengers and crew, was never heard of more. All were lost through putting off ‘till to-morrow what ought to have been done to-day.’” And how many “little ships” are struggling with the storms of the great ocean of life, when the “Gospel ship” is close at hand, and they refuse the aid of Jesus, the great and good Master!

4. *We must not waste it.* If we felt it were uncertain whether we could obtain another supply of bread, how careful we should be never to waste any! So let us never waste a single precious moment. For it is by a right use of moments we may obtain, by Christ’s mercy, the bread of eternal life. “Suppose a man had a string of pearls, which he was to use instead of money, for obtaining food, and you saw him on a river, carelessly, as the boat glides along, letting fall one after another into the stream *these pearls*, til all were gone, and he, beginning to want food, had no means of obtaining it, would you not say, ‘foolish man to have acted so?’ Much greater is your

folly if you are *wasting* the precious moments and golden hours given you by God that, by a proper use of them, you may get eternal life."

5. *The first and best use to make of it.* "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi, 33. You will have the blessing of the Lord in this life, all your wants for time will be supplied, and, best of all, you will be safe and blessed in eternity.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

PICTORIAL LESSON.

THE teacher has hung up before the class a colored lithograph of the Good Samaritan, ten by fifteen inches, issued by the London Religious Tract Society.

The lesson may be given to children eight years old. The time occupied should not exceed twenty minutes. No doubt it will seem simple to those unacquainted with the system, but it is enough for the thoughtful teacher to know that such lessons are calculated to awaken great interest, cultivate the moral sense, and thus lead the way for serious impressions. It may occur to some that many questions are asked to obtain a certain answer. This is to prevent the use of direct questions, which are to be strictly avoided.

There is a certain order of proceeding in such a picture lesson: 1. Observation. Children note objects, whether persons or things, and telling all they see, and as much of the story as possible. 2. Teacher filling in that which can not be told in a simple, clear way. 3. Judgment of the class exercised in regard to the moral. 4. Application to the class.

The letters I. R. mean individual recitation, and S. R., simultaneous recitation by the class.

ALL look at this picture and tell me something you see. *Trees.* Emma, show me something else. *Camel.*

Yes, how many ever saw a camel? Where? Yes, you have seen a real, live one. Why do we not see them every day? *They do n't live here.* Where do they live? *In warm countries.* What live in warm countries? *Camels live in warm countries.* (I. R., S. R.)

Show me something else in the picture. *Men.* How many? They count one, two, three, four. What else do you see? *Jug.* What do you think might be in it? *Molasses.* No. *Milk.* No. The teacher leads the children to find clothes, rocks, chain, etc.; then—pointing to a road—says, What do you call *this* all along here? *Road.* What do we see all along roads? *Trees and houses.* What do you see along *this* road? *Nothing but rocks.* Who would like to take a walk here all alone? *No one.* Why? *I would be afraid.* Whom do you think might be there in some of those holes? *Wild beasts.* Yes, and something worse. *Men that might hurt somebody and get his money.* What do you call those men who take money that does not belong to them? *Robbers.* What is this?—pointing to the man's clothes. *Blood.* What do you think may have happened to *this* man? No answer. I will tell you. This man was going from Jerusalem to a place along here. How many ever heard of Jerusalem? All respond, "I have." Well, some men came out and robbed him—took away all his money, clothes, and every thing—left him almost dead—he could not get away at all. He has lost so much blood that he is very weak. He lies there all alone so sick—how must he feel? *Sad.* By and by a man came along—how do you think the sick man felt? *Glad.* Why? *Thought he would be helped.* Yes, but the man went right along, and did not help him. How did the sick man feel now? *Sad.* Yes, that is the way he felt. Pretty soon another man came along—how did the sick man feel this time? *Glad.* Yes, he was

glad, but *he* went along, and the poor sick man felt very sad again. By and by *this* man came along on a camel, got off, and helped him. What do you think he did? No answer. What are these? *Things to put on those sores.* We call them bandages. What else do for him? *He is pouring something out of a bottle.* He is pouring on oil. Children required to repeat in concert. He gave him something else—what does the doctor give people when they are very sick and too weak for medicine? *Wine.* Yes, then he put him on a camel and took him to a house and had him taken care of.

Which of these men do you like best? *This man—* pointing to Good Samaritan. Why did this man do so much for this sick man? *He was good.* Yes, and how would he like to have people do to him? *Just the same.*

The teacher again refers to picture. What is this? *Camel.* This? *Man.* Tell me about him. The children give the story.

Now, children, you may never be called upon to help a poor man like this one, but there are many things you can do for others. Sometimes when you are going to school you see somebody hurt, what would you do for him? *Help him.* Why? *Would want him to help me.* Tell me sometimes when you want help. *In sickness.* What do you want them to do for you? *Take care of us, bring oranges, cake, and other things.* Then, how should you do to others? Who can tell me a little text? "Do unto others as you would have others do to you." (I. R., S. R.) Some children go to school and have no shoes, no mittens; you have two pair, what should you do? *Give one pair to some one.* If you were in the same way what would you like him to do for you? The children state. Pointing to picture, Which of these men do you like best? Children state. Who loves this man? *God.*

Who else does God love? *Every body.* And whom do we please when we do right? *God.* Then be good children, and—Children repeat, “*Do unto others as you would have others do to you.*”

THE HEN GATHERING HER CHICKENS.

AN INFANT CLASS LESSON.

By DAVID STOW, Scotland. Mode, by picturing out, by questions, ellipses, familiar illustrations. The verse is read very slowly and distinctly, one word only being given at a time.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”

JESUS says he would have gathered all the people of Jerusalem together—“even as a hen . . . *gathereth her chickens—under . . . her wings.*” Can you tell me how a hen gathers her chickens together? Have any of you ever seen a hen gathering her chickens together? *Yes, sir; my mother has hens.* And have your mother’s hens any chickens? *Yes, sir, a great many chickens.* This girl will tell us if she has ever seen the chickens run under the wings of the mother. *The hen clucks, and they run under her wings.* Chickens are . . . What are they? *Young hens.* When do they run under the wings of the mother hen? *When they are frightened.* Fear causes them . . . *to run under the hen.* Whenever the hen perceives, that is . . . *thinks—or sees* there is any danger to . . . *the chickens—she . . . spreads her wings out—round about her body, in this way—and cries . . .* What does she cry? *Cluck, cluck.* And what happens? *They all run under her wings.* [Action is of some importance at

this stage of the exercise. The teacher may spread the fingers of both hands, moving them circularly round his body, and pointing his fingers to the ground, in imitation of the pinions of the hen.]

If you held your father's hand on a dark night on the street, or on a dreary road, how would you feel? *Quite safe.* You would think yourself . . . *safe—from . . . harm.* Or, if this little girl were to be attacked by a dog, and her mother took her by the hand, how would she feel herself? *Safe.* Very well—the chickens run under the wings of . . . *the hen*—when they are . . . *afraid of being hurt.* Supposing a cat were to run after the little chickens to seize them, where would they run? *Under the wings of the hen.* And the chickens would feel themselves . . . *safe.* And what would the cat do? *Run away.* Why? *Because the hen would strike its eyes out.* The hen might peck . . . *the cat's eyes out*—if it attempted to . . . *touch the chickens*, and therefore you think the cat . . . *would run away.*

Now, then, children, do you know how many inhabitants there were in Jerusalem at that time—that is, when Jesus was in this world? *Fifty thousand—more than half a million, sir.* The last answer is nearly right, children. Jerusalem was an immense city, resembling, but not so large as London. It contained, let me tell you, above half a million of people—men, women, and . . . *children.* It is said by Josephus, a Jew who lived about that time, and who wrote a history of the awful destruction of . . . *Jerusalem*, that in the city and neighborhood there were destroyed twice the number you state. This sad affair, which is told by . . . Who wrote the book we are now speaking of? *Josephus.* This man lived at the time of our Savior, and he says that there were a great many strangers gathered together at Jerusalem just before the Roman army came against it, so that, although there were not nearly a

million of inhabitants in . . . *Jerusalem*, yet, by one way or another—by the sword when they were . . . *fighting*, and by famine, and other . . . *things*—more than one million persons were slain and otherwise destroyed—not merely men and women, but . . . *little children*. It is a sad story—the people not being able to get out of the city on account of the Roman army that was round . . . *the city*—many thousands wanted food so long that . . . What happened, think you? *They died*; but before they died they were known to eat almost any thing they could get, even rats, and other . . . *animals*. What else would you call these? *Vermin*. What a sad condition they were brought into by the Roman army and by famine! And what was still worse, children, they fought among themselves. No wonder, then, when Jesus knew all these sad things that were to . . . *happen*—that he . . . What did he do when he looked on the city? *He wept over it*. Jesus was . . . How did he feel? *Very sorry*—at the punishment that was to come upon . . . *them*—for their . . . *sins*—and . . . *wickedness*. Mention any of these great sins. *Killing the prophets*—and rejecting . . . *Christ*—and what were they now about to do? *To kill Jesus*.

So.—And yet Jesus said, although he knew all this, he would have taken all these people, all this immense number of . . . *people*—under . . . *his wings*. Look at your books. The Bible says, “How often would I have gathered thy children together!” Jesus here says that he would have gathered all the people of Jerusalem—not merely the little . . . *children*, but the . . . *big people*—of . . . *Jerusalem*—under . . . *his wings*. And they would be quite safe—as safe as the chickens are under . . . *the wings of the hen*. *Jesus had no wings, master*. This little boy is quite right; Jesus had no wings. Can you tell me of what use the wings are to the chickens? *To keep them safe*.

Then suppose any of you in the gallery were afraid of being attacked by some animal while you were going home from school, and I were to take you under my arm, what would my arms be to you? *Like the hen's wings.* I could not fly with my . . . *arms*—but my arms could . . . *keep us.* My arms could keep or protect the . . . *boy* or . . . *girl*—just as the . . . *wings of the hen*—protect . . . *little chickens.* My arms are able to protect one child, and the wings of the hen are sufficient protection to . . . *little chickens.* Then to be under Christ's wings is to be under his . . . *care*—and . . . Another word? *protection.*

Now, would *you all* be safe at this moment were a furious bull or dog to come into this school? *There are too many of us.* Would I be safe under your wings or protection? *No, sir, we're too little.*

You think that one of you might be safe under my . . . *arms*, but the whole school would . . . *not be* safe. Let us see what the Bible says: "How often would I have gathered you together"—that meant . . . *all the people of Jerusalem*—"even as a . . . *hen gathereth her chickens under her wings*—and ye . . . *would not!*" (Expressed very slowly, and in an under tone of voice.) "And—ye—would . . . *not.*" Just like too many persons who will not put themselves under Christ's protection. They will not come . . . *to Christ.* They will not put their trust in . . . *Jesus*—or believe . . . *in him.* (Give an incidental lesson.) And, although Jerusalem was a large city, yet Jesus says he would often have taken the whole hundreds of thousands of the . . . *people*—of the . . . *Jews in Jerusalem*—under his wings, and kept them quite . . . *safe.* Could I or any here do that? *No, sir.* Who could do that? *God.* God only could . . . *do such a thing.* Then, who must Jesus Christ be? *God.* But Jesus did something when he looked on that large city, doomed to destruction for its great

wickedness. What did he do? *He wept over it.* You remember, also, that Jesus wept . . . Where? *At the grave of Lazarus.* It is said in that interesting account on approaching the grave . . . *Jesus wept.* Can God weep, think you, children? *No, sir.* God can not . . . *weep*—or shed tears as . . . *we do*—but . . . *Jesus wept.* Then what must Jesus be? *Man.* Why? *Because he wept.* Man because he . . . *wept*, and . . . What else was he besides man? *God.* God because he . . . *He could take all Jerusalem under his wings*—or under . . . *his care*—and . . . *keeping.* Then what must Jesus Christ be? *Both God and man*—God and man in . . . *one person.*

OUR GOD AND THE HEATHEN GODS.

AN INFANT CLASS LESSON.

PSALM CXV, 1-8.

- 1 NOT unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.
- 2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* now their God?
- 3 But our God *is* in the heavens : he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.
- 4 Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.
- 5 They have mouths, but they speak not : eyes have they, but they see not.
- 6 They have ears, but they hear not : noses have they, but they smell not.
- 7 They have hands, but they handle not : feet have they, but they walk not : neither speak they through their throat.
- 8 They that make them are like unto them ; *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

THE children of my class number fifty, about equally divided between boys and girls. They are from five to seven years of age. Their seats are arranged in some sort amphitheatrically, one above the other. I have trained them to come in quietly, and to sit, not at the end of the slip, but as far toward the center as possible, so that as others come in there will be no confusion in pushing past

those already seated. When fairly seated, I announce the verse of a hymn, familiar in word and tune to nearly every one—

“The Sunday school army has gathered once more ;”

and they all sing sitting. Next, lifting my right hand, the whole class rises simultaneously, and with scarcely an audible sound. Hands are folded on the breast, and prayer is offered, scarcely ever exceeding seven or eight sentences in length. Each child follows me, as word after word is uttered: “O Lord, we thank thee for this Sabbath morning, so beautiful and bright. We thank thee for our kind parents and pleasant homes ; we thank thee for the Sunday school and the Holy Bible. May we all love thee, and praise thee, and obey thee ! Keep us, every one, from wrong doing, from sinning, and from harm, and save us at last in heaven.”

If any member of the class is sick, or away, or gone on a journey, I pray for such a one by name, and all follow. Prayer over, a second verse is sung :

“God has said, forever blessed
Those who seek me in their youth !”

After which the lesson is read over, word by word, carefully, the whole class repeating it after me in concert.

“To whom do we give glory?”

“To the Lord.”

“Does the verse say to the Lord?”

Let us say it over again: “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.”

“To the Lord’s name?”

“Yes.”

“Why give glory to the Lord’s name?”

“Because he says so.” “Because of his mercy.”

“Because of his truth.”

"What is it to give glory to any body?"

"To love them." "To praise them."

"And what is it to give glory to God's name?"

"To praise and love his name."

With an upward movement of the hand all silently rise, and with a downward stroke they as quietly resume their seats. This I repeat twice or thrice, till I am satisfied every little body is rested.

"Now, let us sing again :

'Glory to the Father give,
God in whom we move and live;
Children's prayers he deigns to hear,
Children's songs delight his ear.'

"Do any of you remember the lesson of last Sabbath?"

"It is about the Saviour and the Little Man," answer a score or more.

"And who was the little man?"

Some hesitation ensues, when one of the little girls responds, "Zaccheus."

"What was last Sunday's lesson?"

"About Jesus and Zaccheus, the little man."

"Try again."

"Jesus and Zaccheus," louder and fuller than before.

"And what is the lesson of to-day about?"

"God and idols."

An idol, children, is a little thing that men make out of wood, or clay, or stone, and which they pray to. Sometimes it is no bigger than my little finger or my penknife; sometimes it is as large as a man's arm or a man's body. Idols are made by the poor people, called heathen, way beyond the sea. Sometimes the little heathen boys, when they get into trouble and want bread, will get down on their knees before a little idol by the side of the road, and ask it to help them. Sometimes the men and women

will take an idol out of their pockets and pray to it. They think more of praying to it than they think of eating their rice dinner.

"What do little heathen children do?"

"Pray to their little idols."

"What do the people eat for their dinner?"

"Rice."

"What idols in our country?"

"None." Here tell of dress, or money, as idols of little and grown-up people.

"Do we pray to little idols?"

"No, sir."

"What is an idol?"

"A piece of wood." "A little piece of wood that men pray to." "A piece of clay that men bow down to."

"Now let us read again: Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not."

"What are the idols made of?"

"Wood and clay."

"No."

"Silver;" yes—"Silver and gold."

"How can they hear or talk?"

"Can 't hear or talk either."

"Now let us say those words over again." Every face is in the direction of the teacher, and every eye looking into his. As the word *mouth* is uttered, the right hand of each scholar touches the lips, and as they say 'eyes have they,' each hand goes to the eyes, and so on, as *ears*, *noses*, *hands*, and *feet* are uttered, the whole class proceeds in appropriate manner, and in concert, to indicate the same.

The exercise is a physical relief, and is not destitute of something graceful.

"Is our God like the heathen gods?"

"He is a heavenly God."

"What can we thank him for?"

"For this Sunday morning." "For the Bible." "For the Sunday school." "For our kind teacher." "For our Lord Jesus Christ," replies the fifth.

"Where does God live?"

"In heaven."

"Who else lives there?"

"The holy angels."

"Any body else?"

"My mother."

"Who else?"

"My little sister," answers a little boy on one of the back seats.

"Then there are little children in heaven, are there? How many?"

"Ever so many—thousands."

Another verse is sung.

The same words can be treated in a variety of ways, at the option of the teacher. The subject of praying to our God and to the gods of the heathen could be a ten, or even fifteen minutes' profitable consideration.

"What is it to pray to God?"

"To speak to him." "To ask him for something." "To say we are sorry for sinning." "To tell him we want help."

"Do any of you know a prayer?"

"Our Father which art in heaven," respond half the class.

"Any other?"

"Now I lay me down to sleep."

“Can you say *all* of that little prayer?”

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

“Do you know any other?”

“Pity, Lord, a little child,
Very thoughtless, very wild,
Full of folly, full of sin,
Full of evil thoughts within.”

Or this:

“Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to thee.”

“How many gods did you say there are?”

“One.”

“How is that?”

“The Bible says there is but one true God.”

I will now tell you another prayer. It is in three verses, and you may say it over after me till we learn it, and then when you go to bed at night you can pray it.

“Jesus, tender shepherd, hear me;
Bless thy little lamb to-night;
Through the darkness be thou near me,
Watch my sleep till morning light.

All this day thy hand hath led me,
And I thank thee for thy care;
Thou hast clothed, and warmed, and fed me,
Listen to my evening prayer.

Let my sins be all forgiven,
Bless the friends I love so well;
Take me, when I die, to heaven,
Happy there with thee to dwell.”

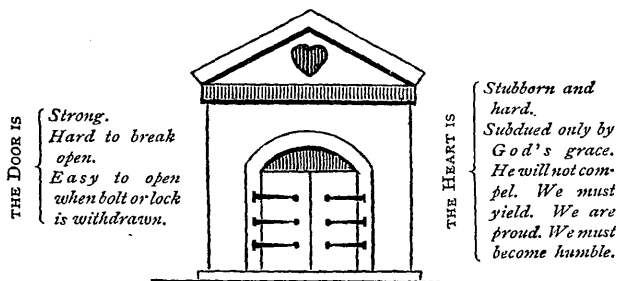
Now let us say some of the verses over again: “But our God is in the heavens,” etc.

BLACKBOARD LESSONS.

FURNISHED BY C. H. WOLFF.

FIRST, we open the door or receive the Savior; second, we unite with his Church; third, we bear the Cross, and obtain at last the Crown.

THE DOOR OF THE HEART.



REV. III, 20: "Behold *I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*"

1. *Sin* has closed the DOOR OF OUR HEARTS to shut the *Savior out*.
2. *Jesus* comes and *knocks* for entrance.
3. *Man* has the power to *keep Him out*, or give Him entrance.
4. *Admitting Him*, he not merely *enters*, but *sup*s with us.
5. *This proves HIS FRIENDSHIP* for us.
6. *Jesus comes* as the REDEEMER in forgiveness and love.
7. JESUS CHRIST is our PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING.

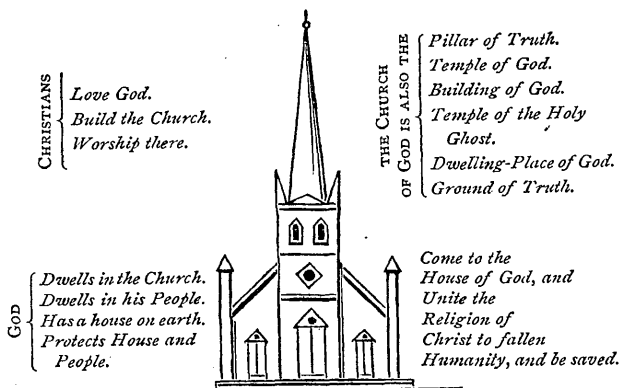
STRIVE	}	By learning Good habits in the Sunday school.
AGAINST		
BAD HABITS		

BE	}	So will you obtain the Wisdom better than silver and gold.
ALWAYS		
TEACHABLE,		
HUMBLE,		

SERVE	}	That you may reign with Him.
CHRIST,		

HONOR,	}	That it may be well with you in Time and in ETERNITY.
OBEY		
OUR		
LORD,		

THE CHURCH OF GOD.



- I TIM. III, 15: "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
- I COR. III, 16: "Know ye not, that ye are the *Temple of God*, and that *the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*"
- I COR. III, 9: "For we are *laborers together with God*: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are God's building.*"
- I COR. VI, 19: "What! know ye not that *your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.*"
- I COR. III, 17: "If any man *defile the temple of God*, him shall God *destroy*: for the *Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are.*"
- REV. VII, 15: "And serve Him *day and night in his Temple*, and he that sitteth on the throne *shall dwell among them.*"
 (Question: What will those do in heaven, as above indicated, who love not God's Temple and its worship here? how can they be happy there, if required to be in his Temple day and night? that is, continually—day and night simply means division of time as understood upon earth.)

Without *assembling* together as Christians there is no Church. There are *Church members* separately at home and elsewhere.

They must *meet somewhere* in a congregated capacity to constitute a Church.

"Jesus Christ is the head of the body, the Church," and without Him no true Church can exist. (Colossians i, 17, 18.)

CROWN.



CROSS AND CROWN.



CROSS.



TO OBTAIN THE CROWN, { <i>Take up the Cross.</i> <i>Follow Christ.</i> <i>Deny thyself.</i> <i>Bear the Cross</i> <i>daily.</i> <i>Let no man take</i> <i>thy Crown.</i> <i>Be faithful till</i> <i>death.</i>	ALL { <i>Enemies of the</i> <i>Cross end in</i> <i>Destruction.</i>	HYMN 145. <i>"When I survey the won-</i> <i>drous Cross," etc.</i> HYMN 782. <i>"Courage, my soul, thy</i> <i>bitter Cross," etc.</i>
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JESUS said concerning the Cross :

MATT. X, 38 : "And he that taketh not *his Cross*, and *followeth* after me, is not worthy of me."

LUKE IX, 23 : "Let him *deny himself*, and take up his *Cross* daily, and follow me."

ST. PAUL said of the Cross :

GAL. VI, 14 : "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the *Cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ."

PHIL. III, 18, 19 : "For many walk that are the *enemies* of the *Cross* of Christ : whose end is destruction."

JESUS said of the Crown:

REV. II, 10: "*Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer. . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.*"

REV. III, 11: "*Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown.*"

ST. PAUL said of the Crown:

1 COR. IX, 25: "And every man that *striveth for the mastery is temperate* in all things. Now they do it to obtain a *corruptible Crown*, but we an *incorruptible*."

2 TIM. IV, 8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

PENITENCE. Sorrow for sin.

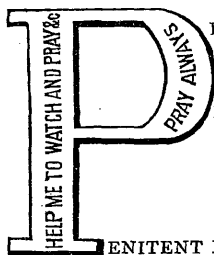
REASON. "Come, let us reason together." Isaiah i, 18.

ADVOCATE. Jesus Christ our Savior.

YEARNING, for adoption.

ETERNITY, of happiness or woe.

RELIGION of Christ. Prayer the key to it.



PERSEVERING PRAYER. { The Widow and the Unjust Judge.

PHARISAI PRAYER. . . . { The Pharisee in the Temple.

PENITENT PRAYER. { The Publican in the Temple.

MAP DRAWING.

THE "methods" that stand highest are "triangulation" and "relative measurements." We use the latter.

First—Draw the line A B any convenient length for the northern boundary. Call this "the first line."

Second—From B measure off south *five* times "the first line," numbering the points 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Third—From 5 measure off west *three* times the "first line," numbering the points 6, 7, 8. Connect the points A and 8 by a dotted line. This triangular figure shows the general contour of Palestine. Connect A and 6 by a *light* dotted line. This line shows the general direction of the River Jordan, Sea of Galilee, and Dead Sea.

River Jordan rises opposite 1; Sea of Galilee is opposite 2; Dead Sea is opposite 4 and 5; the head of the sea is *one-fourth* of the "first line" north of 4. Principal mountains: Hermon, opposite 1, *three-fourths* of "first line" west, (h.) Gilead, opposite 3, *three-fourths* of "first line" west, (g.) Nebo, or Pisgah, opposite 4, *three-fourths* of "first line" west; *one-fourth* north, (p.) Carmel is opposite 2, on the coast, (c.) Tabor, a little north of a line drawn from Carmel to 3, *three-fourths* the "first line" from Carmel, (t.)

Jerusalem, in line with Dead Sea and Pisgah; length of "first line" east from the guiding line drawn from A to 8. Bethlehem, a little more than *one-eighth* of "first line" south. Nazareth, a little north and west of Mt. Tabor. Sidon, *three-fourths* "first line" from A, on the coast, (s.) Tyre, *one-half* of "first line" south of Sidon, on the coast, (t.) Cæsarea, on the coast opposite a point midway between 2 and 3, (c.) Joppa, on the coast a little north of

THE CATECHISM.

BY REV. J. H. VINCENT.

THE Catechism is a systematic and concise statement of religious truths gathered from the great world of Scripture, just as the text-books of secular science are outlines of truth gathered from the great world of nature. Wisely employed, it renders invaluable service in the systematic Biblical education of our people. We offer a few hints on the true method of teaching it:

1. There might be a ten-minute drill every Sabbath in our schools, even in those which hold but one session. We could not, however, give to the Catechism all this time. Such a distribution as the following would be preferable: Ten minutes a session for thirteen Sabbaths every year might be spent in drills on outlines of sacred history, thirteen in sacred geography, thirteen in missionary facts and figures, and the remaining thirteen in the Church Catechism. If deemed best, let the second quarter of the year—from April to July—be devoted to this exercise. A united, vigorous effort may be secured for a limited number of weeks, which would not be possible if extending over an indefinite period. But just here let us insist upon an important rule: Never allow the Catechism to displace the Word of God as the text-book of the school.

2. During the catechetical quarter the entire Church should be aroused and enlisted. The pastor is responsible for the work of catechising, and his personal influence is indispensable. He should appeal to parents from the pulpit, urge upon them the study of the catechism at home with their children, refer to it earnestly in his pastoral

visitations, insist upon it in the teachers' meetings, remind old and young of it in the week-evening prayer meetings, and in the school itself, if necessary, he should set an example by reciting the catechism with teachers and scholars in the simultaneous exercise.

3. The concert method of teaching is very effective when supplemented by careful personal examination in each class and at home. During the ten-minute drill, which must be on the concert plan, it is desirable that the answers be *prompt, distinct, loud, hearty, and harmonious*. By this means enthusiasm is awakened, the faculties quickened, and the exercise becomes a positive pleasure. In order to this result the superintendent must insist upon answers from *all*. Silent teachers make silent scholars. If the young ladies and young gentlemen of the school do not answer but few of the girls and boys will, and thus the concert exercise becomes stupid. Teachers should set an example to the scholars. They *must* answer questions when the superintendent requests it. The pastor may easily remove all embarrassment and false dignity among teachers and senior scholars by taking his place among them and promptly answering questions announced from the desk.

4. We have seen a beautiful tablet suspended against the wall in the rear of the superintendent's desk, containing three columns, in which were registered the names of scholars who had completed the three Catechisms of the Church. With many this may prove an incentive. In order to the registry of the name in the first column require testimony from the teacher to the thorough examination of the pupil in Catechism No. 1.

5. Special meetings may be held during the week, at which the pastor may deliver brief lectures on the Catechism, with anecdotes, blackboard analyses, etc. Four or

five such meetings during the catechetical quarter will be of much value.

6. Every lesson in our Catechism may be illustrated by pertinent anecdotes. For a collection of illustrations about God, see "Our Sunday School Scrap-Book," published by Carlton & Porter, 200 Mulberry-street, New York. The habit of noting such items as we meet them will fill our memorandum and scrap books.

7. Use the blackboard. The use of chalk arrests attention. The creation of some diagram or suggestive letter or syllable on the board excites curiosity. In addition to this it aids the memory.

G. C.	{	1. <i>u. S.</i>	6. <i>l.</i>
		2. <i>ev.</i>	7. <i>h.</i>
		3. <i>a. w.</i>	8. <i>m. g. s. p.</i>
		4. <i>a, m.</i>	9. <i>j.</i>
		5. <i>et.</i>	10. <i>t.</i>

In this outline I have the first section of chapter first, in Catechism No. 1, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The blackboard before the class, the teacher, pointing to each initial letter, says :

"God is the Creator of all things. Ten things are said about God in this section : 1st. He is an *uncreated* Spirit ; 2d. *Every-where* present ; 3d. *all-wise* ; 4th. *al-mighty* ; 5th. *eternal* ; 6th. *love* ; 7th. *holy* ; 8th. *merciful* and *gracious*, slow to anger, and *plenteous* in mercy ; 9th. *just* ; 10th, the God of *truth*."

Then follows a review, then another, and another ; next an erasure of some of the letters ; finally, the removal of all from the board, and a review again and again till every answer is fully known by the whole class.

Or by a process of word-building we may give a tolerably correct idea of the more difficult theological terms in

the Catechisms. Look at section 3 of chapter iv, Catechism No. 1. *The fruits of faith.* The teacher says: "The life of an apple-tree causes the tree to yield—what? *Leaves, blossoms, apples.* Now there is a faith-life in the Christian, and there are outgrowths or results of it. Here they are—J. R. S. Let us examine them." We place on the board the word Just, and explain and illustrate it. "Is a man 'just' who is indebted to two men, and pays one of them, while, though able to do it, he refuses to pay the other? Is a man 'just' who, though he yields his *neighbor* kindness, honesty, help, etc., never yields *God* obedience, worship, or love? Who is 'just' if this be the rule? Who can make himself just? What must be done before a man can stand 'just' before God? *He must be forgiven.* Making just or forgiving is to JUSTIFY. And the act of God in forgiving a man's sins is JUSTIFICATION. God does forgive or justify the soul that believes in Jesus Christ. What book of the Bible begins with the letters GENE? [All will say Genesis.] The beginning of things. [So explain the word GENERATE.] Sin destroys. The man who is sinful is 'DEAD in trespasses and sins.' When God justifies, he also REGENERATES. So the giving of a new life to the soul that is justified is REGENERATION." [So again from SANC., build up, (from the Latin,) Sanctus—Sanct., Saint, (for easier pronunciation,) Sanctuary, Sanctify, SANCTIFICATION.] Long, dry words, by this process, acquire meaning.

Suppose, now, in illustration, we wish to study the catechetical definition of justification. We place it thus on the board:

J. is that — of — free — in which He — our sins, and — us as right- eous — — — for the sake of —.
--

So substitute a stroke for a word, from time to time, till the whole definition looks like this on the board:

J. is that _____
He _____, and _____ us _____
_____ sake _____.

8. Introduce hymns, illustrating the truths of the lesson. Place them on the board. Explain, and then with devotion sing them. How appropriate, after the lesson just illustrated, to sing:

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, *pardon, cleanse*, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe—
O Lamb of God, I come!

9. Finally: always make a practical application of the lesson. Go from the printed page to the conscience, from the letter of God's truth to the heart, that needs, and perhaps longs after that truth. Build up, by the Catechism, a strong, enduring, theological frame-work in the mind. By prayer, clear illustration, and personal appeal, plant the truth in the heart. Then expect the vine and branches, the tendrils, leaves, and blossoms to cover and beautify the trellis you have reared, and in due time the clusters will hang there. Even to heaven shall the trellis rise, and in heaven you may, after awhile, gather the fruits of your labor.

OUTLINE ADDRESSES.

OUTLINE ADDRESSES.

FOUR THINGS TO REMEMBER.

BY REV. J. H. VINCENT.

AN artist in Germany wished to make a bust of Christ, so that his character should be expressed in the countenance. He formed the model in clay, but could not tell whether he had given a correct expression to the features. To test the matter, he called in a Sunday school boy, and, pointing to the statue, asked him who that was? The boy said he did not know, but thought it must be some great king. The artist then sent the boy away, and changed the expression of the features. Then calling the boy again, he asked who it was; and he immediately replied, "*That is my blessed Savior!*"

Learn from this that a little child *may know Jesus.*

There was a great philosopher who had a child that was dying. The weeping father took the child by the hand, and asked, "Do you love me, darling?" "Yes," replied the child, "but *I love Jesus more.*"

Learn from this that a little child *may love Jesus.*

In a great revival a child was converted, and coming home to her mother, she said, "Mother, Christ has forgiven my sins, and I am so happy, I want to go and tell somebody." The mother thought she had better stay at

home, but finally consented that she might go over the street and tell old John, the shoemaker. The child went and told John what Jesus had done for her, and how happy she was, and urged him to give his heart to Jesus. The old man's heart was touched, and he soon began to weep and to pray, and was converted. In less than six weeks sixty persons were brought to Christ through the instrumentality of the little girl and old John.

Learn from this that a little child *may work for Jesus*.

A company of travelers once saw some beautiful flowers on the side of a precipice. They wanted them very much, but had no means of getting them. Seeing a shepherd boy, they called him and told him if he would get those flowers for them they would give him a piece of gold. The boy said he would get them, if his father would hold the rope. The father came and held the rope, and the boy, *trusting* in his father, went down and got the flowers, and received his gold.

Learn, a little child *may trust in Jesus*.

SALVATION.

BY RALPH WELLS.

WHAT is it? How to get it? Why get it?

Now, first, what is it? Salvation is taking a man away from the bondage of sin and keeping him from eternally dying, and giving him, in place of both, a happiness that never has an end. Salvation is a sweeter thing to talk about than sin. Years ago I was traveling in a steam vessel. All the passengers had gone to rest in their berths, when suddenly there was a shock. The vessel had struck.

All rushed upon deck. The sailors were pulling ropes and shouting from the bow; away off in the darkness sounded a voice—Help, help! The steamer had run down a brig, cutting her in two, and all on board perished except this poor man, who was floating on a hen-coop. The sailors got a boat and rescued him, and then there was another shout—Saved, saved! But was the man's soul saved? No, only a man's body. A mill-pond was frozen over, and some boys were passing along near it. One boy saw the ice, and ventured on it, although contrary to his teacher's orders. The ice broke, and he fell in. There was a cry—Help, help! The teacher, with his heart full of love, crept along and pulled the boy out safely, but was lost himself under the ice. The teacher saved the boy, but perished himself. What was saved? The boy's body. But the soul is of infinitely more value than the body, and will live forever, and salvation is the saving of the *soul*.

2. *How to get it?* Some boys were playing. A gentleman asked them to go to Sunday school. They answered, No. He told them of One of matchless love who died for them. Would they come and learn of him? No. One little lame boy said, "What, did he die for me? Any body be kind to me? Yes, I'll come to your school." He got a Testament with his name written in it. Months after, the gentleman, going along the street, was accosted by a little boy—it was in the city of New York. "Black your boots, black your boots?" When they were done the boy looked up with a smile, saying, "Do n't you remember me, sir? Do n't you remember asking a lot of us to Sunday school; and do n't you remember I came, and that the first morning you told me and the rest of the class about Christ dying for us all? I love Jesus now." The gentleman asked him how he showed that he loved the Savior. "O, sir; I have left off swearing and try to do right, work

hard at shining boots, and take home the money to mother." Jesus can make the heart clean. The youngest child can be a Christian. A father asked a gentleman to pray for his little boy, who was not a Christian. He did so, and his father prayed too. Months after, he asked the gentleman to go up stairs to the garret where the little boy slept. They found there a little wooden stool, and on it a Testament, and on the wall a paper on which was written, "O, dear Jesus; O, I wish I could be good, but it's dreadful hard." But at the bottom was another, "But I mean to keep on trying." The way to get salvation is to leave off wrong, and ask Jesus to give you a new heart, and help you to do right.

3. *Why get it?* It makes the soul happy. It makes the soul happy now, and will make it happy in time to come, and forever. Rain is a good thing, but sunshine is more pleasant.

A little girl at Saratoga was called "Sunshine" because she was always happy and cheerful. All loved her. Sunshine from the sky is beautiful, sunshine in the face is better, but sunshine in the heart is best of all. I saw, one day, a little boy crying. What was the matter? "O," said he, "I am lame and weak, and can not do any thing to help mother. She is ill, can't get any medicine to make her well, has no money to pay her rent, and will be turned out." The little girl at first cried, but after a while said, "I'll help. I have a penny; I'll get some apples and sell them." She went to a kind farmer who knew her, and asked for a penny-worth of apples, that she might sell them, and give the money to Willie's mother. The farmer, who loved "Sunshine," gave her an apron-full and the penny back again, and took her in his wagon, picked up Willie, and drove them to a place where there were many rich ladies and gentlemen. The story was told, the apples

sold for five cents apiece, and the money taken to Sunshine's mother.

An iceberg floated down to the Southern latitudes, and by means of the warm waves and the rays of sunshine was melted, and the ice and the rocks of which it was composed fell to pieces. The Sun of Righteousness beams on this cold heart, and melts and softens it. Who will get this salvation? Who will have it? Don't tell *me*, but tell Jesus, and ask him for the new heart and his Holy Spirit. Jesus stands with his arms stretched out to receive *all* who will come to him.

OUR FATHER.

BY GEORGE F. DAVIS.

THE dear Savior when upon earth was often engaged in prayer, and has set us an example to do the same; for if we would be Christians, we must be praying persons, because

"Prayer is the Christian's native breath,
The Christian's native air."

If one of these children should be put into the water, he would soon die for want of breath. If you take a fish out of the water, he would die, because out of his element. So the Christian would soon die if he could not pray. John the Baptist was a great and good man, and we hear much about his preaching, but only once do we hear of his being a praying man. When Jesus was praying in a certain place, his disciples asked him to teach them how to pray, "as John also taught his disciples." Thus we know he was a man of prayer.

In answer to their request, the Savior gave them what we call "The Lord's Prayer." It is very short—much shorter than most of the prayers we hear from Christians when they pray in the Church and Sabbath school; but every word is full of meaning. I wish to talk to you to-day about the first sentence of the prayer, containing only six words; namely, "Our Father which art in heaven."

Why does he tell us to say "*our* Father," instead of *my* Father? I will tell you what I think is the reason. If you were standing near a company of five or six children, and you should hear one of them say of a man coming down the street, "There comes *my* father," would you suppose they were all his children?

Children—No.

But if you should hear one say, "There comes *our* Father," you would suppose they were all of one family. Christ loves all men, and wants us to do the same. He would have us love all men as brothers, and if we do not feel thus, we can not say *our* Father rightly.

A little boy once stopped at the house of a minister to beg something to eat. The preacher gave him a crust of bread, and then asked him if he knew the Lord's Prayer. He replied that he did not know there was such a thing as the Lord's Prayer. He told him he would teach him, and asked him to repeat it after him, and he began:

"Our Father which art in heaven."

"*Our* Father?" said the boy.

"Yes, *our* Father."

"What, sir, is He your father as well as mine?"

"Yes," replied the minister.

"Well then," said the boy, "why do you give your brother such a dry crust of bread?"

And the minister saw the meaning of the words "Our Father." If this is true, we ought to be looking after

these children of "Our Father," these brothers and sisters; some poor, some rich, some black, some white, and bringing them into the Sunday school, that they may learn about Our Father, for he is their Father too.

When we go home to-day, if we should find a little brother had wandered from home, his little feet carrying him, perhaps, into danger, how quickly you would be looking for him; with father and mother and all the rest running hither and thither, and never giving up till you found him. So God would have you go after the lost in this world till you find them, and bring them to his house.

In a large boarding-school for boys, one of them became very sick, and they were obliged to watch him very closely, for his sickness had taken away his reason. But one night, when all was still, and the people in the village and the school in quiet slumber, he escaped from his bed, and they searched for him all through the building, but could not find him. They were very much alarmed, and rang the bell on the building, and as it pealed out in the stillness of the night—ding *dong*, ding DONG! the students turned out; and they rang the door bells of the houses, and awakened the people, and all joined in the search till they found him. He was in an old out-building crouched in the corner and shivering with cold; but he did not know it, for he was crazy. Why did they make such a commotion just to find one boy? He had no relation in the school. Ah! he was their schoolmate, their companion, and they loved him as a brother. So we should feel toward all the children of our Father in heaven. Many are wanderers from God, but they do not know it, for the Bible says, "Madness is in their hearts." They have the disease of sin upon them, and should be treated kindly and watched for.

Then the prayer says, "Our Father *which art in*

heaven." Our Father's house should be our home. If this is true, then we are right when we sing, "Heaven is my home," if we can say *our* Father with a right spirit. Suppose at the close of this meeting we should find some boys and girls lingering in the seats, or around the door, and upon asking them the reason why they did not go to their homes, should be told that they were afraid to meet their father—that they feared his anger or punishment. We should want to know what offense they had committed, and if they were really guilty, then we could understand why they were afraid to meet their father. If I should ask some of these young persons here to-day, if you were ready to die, and go and be with your Father in heaven, would you be ready to go at once? or would there be some lingering, some waiting to get ready? and why? if you loved God you would be glad to go and live with him. Are you afraid to die? Christ has been through the dark valley and shadow of death, and if we follow him we will find he has made the way light and pleasant.

If one of these children had a father across the river who had sent for him, and he was very anxious to see him, and yet would not go because afraid to cross the river, would you not say he was foolish? Why, there is the ferry-boat, thousands are crossing every day, and the Father stands on the other shore and beckons the child to come, and yet he lingers. We would conclude that he was afraid to meet his Father. If any of you should die to-day, what reason would we have for supposing you had gone home to heaven? Could any one say he had heard you talking about it, or making any preparation?

There was a wealthy planter in the South who died suddenly. He had a slave named Ben, and some one told him his master had gone to heaven. Ben looked as

though he did not believe it, and shook his head. They asked him what made him shake his head and say nothing: "O," said he, "I 'fraid massa no gone there." "But why, Ben?" "Well," said Ben, "when massa go North, or go a journey to the Springs, he talk about it a long time, and get much ready. I never hear him talk about going to heaven; never see him getting ready to go there. I do n't believe he is gone there."

Do you not think Ben was about right? Did any body ever hear you talk about going to heaven, as they would if you were going to your father's house after a long absence? or getting ready as you would if you were going across the ocean to spend a few months and return? If not, would we not be obliged to think of you as the slave did of his master? If we loved our Heavenly Father, we would love to think of him and read of that beautiful home as given to us in the Revelation of John.

There was a boy, the son of a clergyman, whose father desired to send him to a school far away, that he might prepare himself to preach the Gospel, as his father had done before him. But his father was poor; he had only a small salary, like too many of our ministers, and it was hard work to spare money enough to fit him out. But his mother prepared his clothes as well as she could; yet they were very plain, and showed where they were mended, and they feared that he would be ashamed of them when he got among the gentlemen's sons at school. They were obliged to go without meat a part of the time, so as to furnish him the money to continue his studies; but this did not trouble them so much as the fear that he would forget his father's house, his home. They prayed for him daily as they kneeled around the family altar, and they asked God to keep him safe from temptation, and that he might love his home. After many weeks had gone by,

the postman left a letter at the house of the minister. It was a very large letter, much larger than one of the copy-books you use at school, and they did not know what to make of it. They paid the postage, shut the door, and commenced to open the package. They wondered whether it was not from the President, finding fault with their son. They thought a great many things as they opened the package with trembling hands and anxious faces; and when at last the wrapper was removed, what do you think it was? It was a picture of his home—of his father's house. While at school, all mixed up with his studies were thoughts of his home; and at night, when the studies of the day were over, he would sit alone and think of his father's house, and spend his leisure hours in painting it. And there it was with the pure white weather-boarding, the green blinds, the fence in front with its gate wide open; the neat walk up to the front door, where his dog Trip lay upon the step; the little green mound, which his sisters had made to cover the large rock which looked out of the ground right there; the trees and flowers he loved so well, and the sun shining upon it all so brightly, and lighting it up with such splendor, it was beautiful. And they looked at it with joy, and were glad when they knew he had not forgotten his father's house. He loved his home, and his thoughts were there.

The Bible says, "Where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also." Dear children, if God, your Father, should look into your hearts when you are alone, or at any time, would he find you thinking of the pearly gates, the golden streets, the River of Life, or the Lamb of God, who is the light thereof? When you say, "Our Father which art in heaven," will you try and think what it means? Will you get your hearts in order so that you can say it right? You must believe that he is the Father

of all; love your neighbor as yourself by trying to save the lost, and think much of your home in heaven; for if you loved your Heavenly Father as you do your earthly father, you would long to be with him, and he would love you, for he says, "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me."

THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.

I AM going to talk to some of the older scholars about the four evangelists who have furnished us, in their four Gospels, an account of the life of Christ. When, as a boy, I was myself a member of a Bible class, we had, one Sabbath morning, an account of a miracle as contained in the Gospel of Matthew. Our teacher made us read the account of the same miracle from the other three Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John, and then proceeded to show us that there was a considerable difference in the account which each one gave. One told one thing, and one told another; no two of them told all the things which occurred, or in the same way. One of them omitted altogether one important fact which the others mentioned as having taken place, and two appeared, at first sight, to be a little contradictory. "Now," our teacher said, "how do you explain this? If these four evangelists *saw* the miracle which they relate, why do not they all tell it in the same way, and all tell the same things? Does not this diversity look a little suspicious? Can they *all* be correct? What is the cause of this difference?" None replied, and it was evident that a good many of us were puzzled. "Well," our teacher went on, "I will show you how it happens, and I will let you see, too, that this diversity in the accounts of these

four writers of the life of our blessed Lord, instead of in the slightest degree casting a doubt on the value of the Gospel narrative, is a very important evidence of its entire truthfulness." Then he said, "Stand up, any four of you who were all together at any place last Saturday afternoon." After a little four of us stood up. "Now," continued he, "I do n't want you to tell me, just now, where you went to, or any thing about your excursion. Each of you go *entirely* apart from the rest, and write an account of what you did last Saturday." One went to one side-room, a second went to another, the other two went to opposite ends of the class-room, and the rest of us went on with the lesson.

By and by the four boys got through with their writing, and one after another brought their accounts to the teacher, who proceeded to read them. It then appeared that they had all been out at Lockland, a village near Cincinnati, seeing a paper-mill, but very different were the accounts which each of them gave of their visit.

The first told a great deal about their walk out, what they did, and what they saw, wrote a little about the mill, but said nothing at all about the coming home. Another said little about the journey either way, but gave a long account of what he had seen at the mill. The third told us how they had come home by a different road from the one by which they went, and narrated a small adventure which had occurred to them on the way back. The fourth told several incidents which none of the others had said any thing about. Their accounts, however, all agreed perfectly with each other, and the one main fact was proved, beyond all doubt, that they *had* gone to Lockland that day, and had seen a paper-mill.

"Now," our teacher said, "this will show you how four people, when separate from each other, will write on the

same subject. Had these four boys all told the same things, I would have been among the first to have thought that they had all put their heads together to make up a story. In like manner, had these four evangelists all told the same incidents in the same way, it would have shown that they had evidently all been writing together, and this would have made me doubt the entire truthfulness of the narrative. But, as we know, they are all different, although all harmonizing most completely. To the apostle Matthew we are indebted for the fullest account of the birth of Christ. Mark says nothing at all about His birth, but proceeds almost at once to narrate his baptism in the Jordan. Luke, going further back, gives us an account of the circumstances connected with the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and of the circumstances preceding the birth of the Savior himself. But the apostle John goes further back than any of them, for he goes to the beginning of the world: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'"

To obtain, therefore, the complete account of the life of our blessed Lord, we must take the whole four Gospels; and, in doing so, we shall find that their several narratives dovetail into each other, and furnish a complete whole. Indeed, by the foregoing and several other proofs, the Gospel narrative is proved beyond all doubt, so much so that in the present day few of those who do not believe in Christianity attempt to deny it. They rather try to deny Christ's divinity; that is, they say that this Jesus Christ, although a very wonderful man, was not God. But how could he possibly be a mere man? Did you or any one else ever hear of a young man of humble origin—poor, unknown, untaught, unbefriended—rising to be the great teacher that he afterward became?

Is it conceivable that one little more than a mere youth, reared in an obscure, disreputable Galilean village, having neither means nor opportunity for education, working for thirty years of his life as a carpenter, without influence or assistance of any kind; is it conceivable that such a man as I have described—and such is simply what Jesus actually was—could all at once leave his obscurity to assume the high position which he did, live a life of the most perfect purity, show the most beautiful example of love and humility that the world has ever seen, speak words of the most wonderful wisdom—which have shed blessing and comfort over the whole world ever since—and become the great teacher, reprover, and reformer of his age? Is it conceivable, I repeat, that this Jesus Christ could have been only a man, and nothing more?

Most of what I have been saying is, perhaps, more suitable for the older scholars here, but before concluding I must say something which every one may understand about the object which Jesus had in coming into the world. As you all well know, it was to save sinners. He was very anxious that they should be saved, and one of the reasons why he was so anxious about this was because he had *so much* to give them.

And is it not painful to think that probably some of us are heedless about what makes Jesus anxious? Such boys and girls may say, "Somehow or other I do not become anxious," but they probably never give themselves an opportunity of being so. Anxiety on a subject is got by inquiring about it, by reading about it, and, on this subject, by praying for it.

Not long ago a family in Edinburgh were sitting happily together in their drawing-room, when one of them, happening to go into the passage, felt a smell of burning. She called out one of those who were in the room. Others

followed, and soon there was a general rush to the kitchen, for there, it was at once found, the burning was going on. Fortunately, no more than a window-blind was consumed, but all were, in a very short time, ready either to exert themselves or to leave the house. The information about fire was enough to create excitement, the smell of it did more, and the sight of the blazing cotton added to this feeling. It is just so with the soul. When God's declarations about its guilt and danger are *believed*, there is a stir, an excitement, a cry for help.

When you read the account of Christ's life some of you may sometimes think, "O, had I lived in the days in which he walked on earth, I would then have embraced him—I would then have truly received him." But this is all wrong. There is but one way of receiving Him, and there never was any other. It is, in the words of the apostle, "Even to them that believe on his name." The Ethiopian eunuch received Him when he believed with *all* his heart. The Philippian jailer received Him when he believed *rejoicing*, and you, too, may receive him as really and truly as did those who, in the days of his flesh, literally received him into their houses, leaned upon his breast, left all and followed him.



MISSIONARY ADDRESS.

EVERY one can do something. Any thing that a boy or girl very much wishes, he most generally succeeds in obtaining. There was a little boy named Howard, whose father was poor—too poor to buy him any of the new books that the neighbor boys seemed so easily to obtain. He had heard a great deal about Robinson

Crusoe, but the book cost more than all the money in his savings' box. What do you think he did? There was, just in the edge of the woods near where he lived, some hickory-nut trees. The trees did not belong to him nor to his father; but he went to the owner and obtained permission to gather two bushels of nuts. They were of a soft-shelled kind, called by some people pig nuts, and were much sought after by druggists for the oil they contained. He—Howard—was over ten weeks engaged in the work; but, at last, the big box in the wood-shed was full, and he knew that he would have money enough, after selling his nuts, not only to buy Robinson Crusoe, but to give something into the treasury of the Sunday School Missionary Society.

Any boy or girl, let them be ever so small, can do something for themselves if they wish, and they can do for others and for the Lord, too, if they really desire. A little girl, whose father was a drunkard, could not obtain even a cent for the missionary cause; but she kneeled down and prayed the Lord to help her. Her mother heard her praying, and told the superintendent about it, and when the superintendent whispered the matter to some of his teachers, all of them helped little Mary in making a contribution.

There was a boy in New York, who worked in a factory, whose mother let him have ten cents with which every day to buy his dinner. He was very anxious to give something to help his Sunday school; so every day, for a month, he saved one cent out of the ten for that purpose, and made his dinner out of the nine cents left.

All *ought* to do something. If good people had not first helped us we might have been a long time, perhaps forever, without the Gospel. There are many people in our country, and in other countries, who would be glad to

hear preaching, and would like to go to Sunday school if they only had clothes and shoes. We who have kind parents, and pleasant homes, and nice Sunday school rooms, and comfortable churches, ought to give something to help those who are destitute of all these. If we can not go in person and help the poor, we can send by others who are willing to carry our money.

We ought to give when young, because it is so much easier then than it ever will be after. When we become old our fingers become stiff, and if we have not learned them to give money to the Lord, and to the Lord's poor, it will be almost impossible to make them work that way at all. The little boy or girl who remembers the poor will always have friends; the Lord will bless such, and the Savior will call them his, and all good people will be glad to meet and know them. We ought to give, because it is a sure way of making ourselves and others happy. I saw two boys once, each with a big ginger-cake in his hands. A third boy, with ragged clothes, came up, and looked as though he would like to have a share. One of the boys said, "No, I shall give to nobody." He meant to eat all of his own himself: the other boy said, "Sammy, here wait a minute till I can get my penknife out." So Sammy held the cake, and Johnny having opened the big blade, cut the cake in two, gave one piece to Sammy, and ate the other himself. I never saw two happier boys than Sammy and Johnny. The boy who kept his cake all to himself looked as though he was full of misery as well as of gingerbread, and he went off sulky and hateful. Giving makes the fingers nimble, the face bright, the heart warm.

We ought to give because Jesus himself has given so much to us. He left his home and all its pleasures and comfort, and gave us all he had, and then died to save

us. He does not ask us to do half as much for others as he has done for them and us. He only asks us to help with *part* of what we have.

We ought to give *regularly*. You know what this means; every week or every month something, not one week a penny, and the next, and the next, and the next nothing, but something every time the day for giving comes round. Suppose there are six million Sunday school children in our country, and every one gives a cent *every month*, that would be twelve cents apiece for the year, or seven hundred and twenty thousand dollars for all. Suppose they should give a cent *every week*, that would make three millions, one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. If these six millions of boys and girls should give only once in awhile, just as it happened, there would not be one quarter of the money raised as when given regularly.

Do you know what self-denial is? It is to give money that you have saved for something you want to use or eat yourself. When you take part of your candy money, and give it to the poor, that is self-denial. But every body who practices self-denial will have the friendship of the Savior. He will take care of all of us if we will trust in him and help take care of the poor in this world. Let us all do what we can to make the world bright; let us help put a pane of glass in the widow's broken window, help fill her flour barrel, and the potato sack, and the coal bin, and then make the wood-pile bigger; let us say kind words to every wretched boy and girl we meet, and if they are cold, clothe them; if hungry, feed them; if ignorant, teach them.

If we thus live we shall make the paths of many people full of sunshine, and God will in the end take us to dwell with him forever.

SOWING AND REAPING.

BY PROF. S. A. NORTON.

SECURE attention by narrating that Washington's father sowed seed in such a manner that when it had sprouted the young plants formed the name George Washington. Draw the lessons: (1.) That the name could not have grown in the garden unless some one had made due preparation; (2.) That all harvests depend on previous sowings; (3.) That the kind of harvest depends on the kind of seed.

Find in the text the reasonable expectation of every sower—"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. vi, 7. Show that the law is universal in nature. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. Useful sorts of seeds produce useful fruits, as grain, potatoes; other seeds produce weeds. Every seed brings a crop after its kind. Nothing left to chance, but all under the working of the same invariable law, "*Whatsoever a man soweth,*" etc.

Make general application of the text. Suitable preparation is followed by corresponding result. The boy that sows study reaps learning; that sows diligence, reaps success; that sows idleness, reaps poverty; that sows mischief, reaps crime.

Illustration: Two Scotchmen emigrate to Australia, and wish to carry with them some memento of "Auld Scotland." The first takes the seed of the Scotch thistle, the national emblem, and sows it in his flower garden. Result: first year, the beautiful plant answering expectations by reminding all admiring beholders of bonnie

Scotland; second year, the plant increases by natural causes and by distributed seed—still a source of comfort to sowers; third year, it begins to encroach among the grain and choke the wheat; fourth year, evidently a noxious seed has been sown, and has become a nuisance to all around. Note parallel, that many forms of vice are not unpleasant in the first stages. The other Scotchman takes a hive of bees for his sowing—bees also remind one of Scotland. Result: first year, the busy buzz of the bees among the queer flowers recalls the memories of home and father-land, and, besides, brings tangible harvest in honey; succeeding years, new swarms, honey for emigrant and neighbors, and some for market. Conclusion: Thistle seed a bad sowing; bees a good sowing, as might have been anticipated; for "*whatsoever a man soweth,*" etc. Note parallel, virtues always good seed to sow, always bring good returns.

Further exemplifications: Kindness begets kindness not merely toward the first sower, but is diffused all around. A cheerful face sows blessed seed in every smile. Even cross people are less surly in the presence of the habitually gentle. Such seed sure to produce a hundred-fold. Vice versa, cross boy makes every one uncomfortable—perpetual fester, because trouble follows him like a shadow when the custom becomes a habit. Kindness begets love, and love all the Christian virtues; but continued fretting and surliness beget dislike, and dislike turns to actual hatred.

The child is father to the man—the seed sown in childhood reaped in manhood. If the boy would be respected as a man, he must sow the seed by his diligence, probity, and Christian life. Happy examples in Washington, Franklin, etc. The harvest of idleness, cruelty, and falsehood not far to seek

Unconscious sowing of every moment, either for good or evil, in the way (1) of forming habits, and (2) of setting examples to others. We sow at all times, and should see to it that the sowing is of the right kind.

Difference between sowing seed and sowing habits: The farmer becomes tired, and finds it ever harder and harder to continue; the habit becomes easier and easier to continue in. One lie indulged in leads to another; one lie resisted makes truth come easier. So with all vices and virtues. If a man suffers a whole crop of vices to grow up in his heart the virtues have no room to germinate.

Harvest to be waited for patiently. The seed sleeps long in the ground; the plant must grow, the flower blossom, the fruit ripen. Most of us reap abundantly in this world, but all sowers of good are to expect a glorious harvest in the New Jerusalem.

Apply the lesson in exhortation to holier lives. Repeat Hosea x, 12: "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy." Psalm cxxvi, 5, 6: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Impress the text and succeeding verse: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

NO MORE TEARS.

WHAT are tears? Little drops, salt like water. Where seen? In eye, on cheek, on pillow, copy-book, mother's lap.

What cause tears? Sudden pain—a fall, a knock—sickness, death of dear ones, passion, disappointment,

penitence, sympathy, sorrow for others' sins—like David, Psalm cxix, 136.

All cry, good as well as bad; even Jesus—Luke xix, 41; John xi, 35. Why? Whence comes all the trouble that brings tears? *Sin*. Every sorrow caused by some sin. Christ's sorrow by our sin.

How happy and bright a child that seldom cries! Suppose *never*—how happy?

There is a place where no tears. Where—at home, in Church, in green fields? Tears every-where in this world. *Heaven*. There all faces bright, all hearts happy. Voices not crying, not complaining, but singing for joy.

Why? *Because God wipes all tears away.* You like mother to do so; it shows her love. How loving must God be—more even than a mother—Isaiah xlix, 15. Sometimes mother can't wipe away your tears, for she can't stop sickness, can't prevent disappointment. How can God wipe *all* away? Because he takes away what brings tears—*sin*. How? (1.) Washed away by blood of Lamb; (2.) Driven away by Spirit in heart; (3.) Put away forever from heaven and all who are there.

Whose eyes? "Their"—the great multitude, Abel, Moses, David, Peter, old and young, kings and beggars. *Shall we be among them?*

On earth much crying; in heaven no crying; another place where *nothing but crying*. How escape *that*? Ask God to take away all sin for Christ's sake, *then* all tears go away too.

WORDS OF WORKERS.

WORDS OF WORKERS.

THE ONE FUNDAMENTAL DESIGN.—The one fundamental design of the whole engagement of Sunday school instruction is to carry the message of salvation directly from the feet of Jesus to the souls of the children for whom Christ has died. I have stood by Sunday school teachers sometimes for two or three weeks to listen to the kind of teaching they were giving, and I have heard not a word of Jesus, not a word of the message of salvation, not a word of the one great purpose for which we were all there; all was incidental, external. Professor Stuart, of Andover, used to say to his students, "The man that sticks in the mere letter fastens himself in the bark." Now, the teacher's duty, in school and out of school, is to get through the bark into the very heart of the tree. Never, *never*, NEVER be satisfied till through the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Call of Abraham, the bringing of the Israelites into captivity or out of captivity the children shall learn that the most important creation for them is the new creation in Christ Jesus by the Holy Ghost; that the only real call that they are to consider is the call of the divine Savior to their soul to love and serve him; that the only captivity it is important for them to escape is the captivity of sin, Satan, and unbelief.—*S. H. Tyng, D. D.*

RELIGION IN DAILY LIFE.—Let us illustrate and enforce our lessons by appealing to the actions with which

the children are daily cognizant. Let us show them that in the running of an errand, the writing of a copy, the hemming of a handkerchief, the lighting of a fire, and the nursing of an infant there is as much room for the exercise of an essentially Christian spirit as there is in kneeling down to repeat an evening prayer, or in approaching the sacred table to partake of the memorials of the Savior's broken body and flowing blood. Our true work is to lay the foundation of Christian principle, to fit the feeble child's heart for the battle with passion within and temptation without, and to convince it that the all-trusting shall be the all-conquering.—*George Barber, England.*

CHRIST FIRST.—Above all, let us take care that none of our teaching diverts the attention of our scholars from the Lord Jesus, and the way of salvation through him. There was a certain great painter who had spent a large amount of time in the preparation of a picture of the Last Supper. When the picture was completed he called some of the masters of the art together to ask their opinion upon it. One and another expressed their views of the performance, till one came forward upon whose judgment he placed great reliance. After looking intently for some time this friend said: "That which strikes me as the most beautiful thing in the picture is that chalice—the lines are so elaborate and the coloring so beautiful." The painter, much disappointed, looked at the picture again, then went to his paint-brushes, and, dipping one into the paint, he slowly but deliberately smeared out the chalice, saying, "I have made a great mistake if that is the most beautiful object in my picture. I wanted the countenance of my Master to be the most prominent thing. I must have nothing in my picture to divert attention from the face of my Master." However excellent and beautiful our lessons may be, let

there be nothing to divert the attention of our scholars from the Lord Jesus, but let all our illustrations be so presented as to lead their minds to him as the prominent object in every picture, the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.—*F. J. Hartley, England.*

THE WORK OF PARENTS.—There are evils and difficulties in all our schools which none but the parents can remove. Prominent is the lack of parental authority, home government in religious duties, extending to the sanctuary and the Sabbath school. Direction, restraint, and authority in respect to the observance of the Sabbath, the study of God's Word, the attendance on preaching and the exercises of the Sabbath school are hardly known at the present day. They belong to the past. They are old notions, and must be discarded. Children, with honorable exceptions, do what they please and as they please on the Sabbath—attend Sabbath school or remain at home, commit the lesson or omit it, go where they hear error or listen to truth, change their school when they will, and for such reasons as they fancy justify their course, preferring the school and the concert which has the most novelties, the greatest excitement. The observance of the Sabbath, the study of God's Word are duties. The child should so understand it. Every parent should feel the responsibility of making these duties pleasant. There should be a higher concern in regard to the matter than as to how the child is to succeed in business. Every teacher should aim, in deepening the impression and in fixing principles, to hold their pupils in the path of duty when assailed by temptation. Then the prosperity of the school is fixed, constant, lasting, not dependent on extraneous influences or the high pressure of excitement.—*Rev. William Howe, Cambridge, Mass.*

THE CONVERSION OF OUR SCHOLARS.—You go, in your Summer journeys, into some wild and striking scenery, and you look above you and see a magnificent rock frowning high aloft in the air. You see growing in its crevices wall-flowers, and other products of the kind, and you say, “How did these ever come to be there?” No human foot ever could have climbed to plant the seeds. The gentle winds of heaven took them up in their arms and carried them there. And so the precious seeds of truth can be carried to the human soul on the breath of human affection, when no other power on earth of which we know is capable of wafting it to its place. Let teachers see, then, that they truly love their children, and the love will prompt them to visit them, to speak kindly to them, to get them a situation if they need it, to look after them in the situation, and O, love is wise, and love is direct, and love is patient, and love is endowed with a blessed tact of its own which makes it successful in winning its way and gaining its end. O, teacher, fail not in this essential requisite if you would secure your scholars’ conversion to Christ. Teachers must be holy persons. Gifts are very different from graces. The world makes much of gifts; God makes much of graces. The world glorifies gifts; many times God mortifies them. God uses graces more than gifts. There was the Corinthian Church; it abounded in gifts, but it was sadly deficient in graces. Some of the very best and most effective ministers that I have ever known were distinguished more by their graces than by their gifts, and common people, in describing them, would very often say, “Well, he is not much of a preacher, but he is a most excellent man.” Now, let us see, as teachers, that we have the Christian graces in active exercise. Let us see that we be holy persons before those whom we teach.—*Rev. John Hall.*

CORRESPONDENCE WITH SCHOLARS.—The superintendent of a large school was obliged to remove to the suburbs on account of his health. He had long hesitated about giving up his post, and was taken to task by others for supposing that no one could fill his place. After removing his residence, he began a school which, at the commencement, did not exceed half a dozen scholars, but now they number one hundred and twenty, though he has such delicate health that he is scarcely able to leave his own house. A gentleman who called on him found him engaged in answering a large number of letters, and found, upon inquiry, that he had been in the habit of corresponding with his scholars since he had been unable to visit them personally. A young man told me that he had known letters from this gentleman arrive at a workshop, and had seen tears trickle down the face of men when reading them; and when asked what was the matter, they would reply that it was a letter from the superintendent, and they did not know that any one cared for them so much. It never occurred to me before, that, so far from excusing myself from visiting, from want of time, it was possible to have sent a line through the post which might have impressed the mind of the recipient with the feeling that some one thought and cared for him.—*John Hodgson, Manchester, England.*

VISITATION OF SCHOLARS.—I have one teacher in my mind who, perhaps twenty years ago, commenced her teaching with a class of girls. She brought them round her in an infant class; she labored to reach the hearts of these children, and with success. She followed them from year to year, having them under her eye, as it were, for fifteen years, and during that time some of the class passed away to a better clime; but always when there

was any thing the matter with these children, the first who was called in was the teacher; and when any of them were on a dying bed, the teacher must be found, and they passed away thanking God for her as the instrument of their conversion to Christ. Of those who remain, every one is a Sunday school teacher. But her work as a mere Sunday school teacher with them is not all, for she has now a class of about a hundred and fifty more. This shows how God gives power to those who give themselves to his work. She visits every one of these families frequently; from forty to fifty families a week. This is a severe task, but who would not be taxed here to read hereafter, in the Lamb's Book of Life, through countless ages of the eternal world, the names of those whom we have been instrumental, under God, in gathering to his fold?—*J. H. Douglas.*

Visit every absent scholar during the week. If sick, visit them frequently. Carry them papers, pictures, flowers, books, delicacies. Chat lovingly and encouragingly to them. Read to them. "Time?" Take time. Deny yourself. Let it *cost* you something. Never allow an absent scholar to be seven days unvisited. One call may save him. Visit the parents. Study the child's home. Consult with father and mother as to the best interests of the scholar. Secure their assistance in the weekly preparation of his lesson. See if there are not other children there who should attend school. Get the parents to attend church. If they attend church, see if they attend Sunday school as often as possible. Encourage your scholars to visit you. Have one hour each week—the reception hour—when you will always be happy to greet them at your own house or room. Or appoint one evening a month for this purpose. Ask them to take a cup of tea with you. These are very little things; but they

may prove to be silken cords, which will hold tightly and lift heavenward little souls which, perhaps, stout cables of effort could never touch.—*Rev. J. H. Vincent.*

MANNER BEFORE THE CLASS.—There is a certain sharpness or severity on the part of some teachers, which is a mistake, and is sure to damage their influence in the class. I have stood by a class, sometimes when the teacher was not aware of my presence, and have seen him give one child a pull, another a poke, and a third a pat on the head within almost as many seconds: with the constant utterance of such expressions as these—"Do be quiet;" "Can't you sit still there?" "Do n't talk there;" and so on. This incessant restlessness, this sharp, feverish treatment, is unhealthy, and is sure more or less to depress the minds of the children, and thus largely defeat the ends of Sunday school instruction. When the Bishop of St. Asaph's was rector of a parish, I went with him into a school just at a moment when it was in great disorder. On witnessing the tumult he did not raise his voice, but, going into the room and looking around him, said in a very distinct but gentle voice, "I think one little boy is speaking louder than is necessary." The school was instantly stilled, for every conscience-stricken offender applied the remonstrance to himself.—*Rev. Dr. Spence, England.*

If I come with my face drawn up like a baked apple—is that the figure?—or rigid, hard, "pious," you may term it, if you have a mind to, it will not be long before I shall have before me hard, rigid faces, like pinched apples in my class; for like teacher, like scholar. If the love of Jesus glows in the teacher's face, the class will reflect it. The type of piety in a teacher is photographed on the scholars when they are converted. Adapt yourself to

youthful circumstances and conditions. It will not do to get into a tree and call out, "You poor sinners, come up here!" The "poor sinners" won't come. You must get down upon their level and raise them to yours, little by little. It does not do to despise the feeble attainments in grace and knowledge of any; to look upon men around you as poor, wretched creatures, and sin with the Pharisee as he looks at the Publican and says, "My! how far from Christ he is!" Once when I was complaining of the lack of certain teachers to my old pastor, Dr. Hutton, he said, "Yes; I think they are just about where you were when I first knew you!" It cut.—*R. Wells.*

METHOD IN A NUTSHELL.—There are three principal objects to be ever kept in view by the Sunday school teacher, namely: 1. The conversion of the soul; 2. Instruction in Scripture knowledge; 3. Christian culture. There are four faculties through which this work is principally accomplished: 1. *The understanding*—the attention must be gained, the subject made clear, the thoughts of the lesson rendered forcible; 2. *The memory*—the subject must be presented so that it can be retained, like things grouped with like, facts with facts, principles with principles, or the principle with the fact from which it is deduced, things in their natural order; 3. *The conscience*—every lesson should impress the mind of the pupil with a sense of responsibility, every lesson should be a moral discipline; 4. *The heart*—no lesson is complete that does not go to the depths of the child's nature and draw the heart toward the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Rev. Edward Eggleston.*

CHILDHOOD PIETY.—We are apt to forget that a child does not cease to be a child after the tender embrace of the loving Savior any more than an adult Christian ceases

to be a man. We retain our individuality in the Christian sphere. A Christian boy might shock the notions of some of his seniors in the faith were he to be detected climbing a tree or leaping a ditch, and a Christian girl would provoke the frown, perhaps, of some maidenly aunt were she to confess to a love for dolls, and skipping-ropes, and a romp on the lawn; but they might be good Christians, notwithstanding. A man does not forfeit his title to be a Christian by his attention to business, neither should a child by his devotion to his plays. The transition from the family altar to a game at cricket is not greater to a child than the transition to the counting-house or the shop is to an adult. It is most unnatural, and the result will be pernicious, to frown down a love of play in a child as being inimical to Christianity. A child may be a Christian without being able to define the precise moment when his affections found rest in Christ. But many little ones have been frowned back by some injudicious deacon because they have not been able to tell when they first passed from the twilight of the artless simplicity of childhood into the full sunlight of Christianity.—*Mr. Charlesworth, London.*

CONDUCTOR OF AN INSTITUTE.—The conductor should be a public instructor who knows the whole ground himself, knows the art of teaching, and should have his heart right, all aglow with ardor in the work. The value of a well-conducted institute can scarcely be overestimated. One held many months ago in Ann Arbor has left its influence palpably and strongly marked to this hour. It vitalized the schools and teachers of the city and vicinity to a large degree.—*E. O. Haven, D. D.*

REVIEWING AND REPEATING.—I wish to send a dispatch to Mobile. I hand it to the operator, and ask, "How

much?" "Four dollars." "Will that make it sure?" "Not absolutely; we can repeat it for two dollars additional, and make it so." The words are, "Not good for any amount." Click, click, click—the dispatch is gone. The operator in New York, whence I dispatch, asks his friend in Mobile to repeat or send back the message. Back it comes, reading, as I wrote it, "Not good for any amount;" all right. I pay my six dollars. If it had not been repeated it might have read, "Note good for any amount," and the change of the one little letter would have made me infinite trouble. By recalling and repeating I *know it is all right*. Recall and repeat with your pupil, and know that he knows that all is right.—*Rev. J. H. Vincent.*

Three practical rules will embrace the most useful forms of reviewing: 1. Begin each recitation with the review of the preceding lesson; 2. As soon as the class has advanced five or six lessons, begin a review from the beginning, taking one or two lessons only for each time; 3. Let the teacher hold in mind as much as possible of the whole ground gone over, and, as occasion offers, make an impromptu, miscellaneous review, without closely following the order of the lessons. These reviews may sometimes embrace only the heads or chief topics of each lesson. In many of the Sunday schools a review is never thought of. The lessons are learned and lost in quick succession, and the year ends as it begins, with scarcely any advance in real knowledge of the Scriptures.—*J. M. Gregory, LL. D.*

UNCONVERTED TEACHERS.—"Should we *never* employ an unconverted teacher?" I can not say *never*, without qualification. If the question related to trifling, thoughtless persons, my reply would be an emphatic *never*. But sometimes a person of irreproachable reputation, of prayerful habits, and serious turn of mind, not professing

to be justified, wishes to teach. I would not reject such, though I would seek to make him feel the need of going to Christ in good earnest as a condition of successful teaching. It is a good rule never to employ an unconverted teacher, but it must be applied with godly judgment.—*D. Wise, D. D.*

It is a question of supply and demand. Get the good ones if you can; if you can not, get the best you can. But there is a great responsibility resting on the superintendent. In the fifteen years I have been superintendent, I have admitted seventy-two unconverted teachers. Out of that seventy-two, seventy-one were brought to Christ; and the other his father took away. The secret was with the God of heaven. So if you have to employ an impenitent teacher, leave no stone unturned to bring him to Jesus, and you will succeed. It is impossible for any one to continue teaching a child the truths of the Gospel, under the eye of a holy, faithful superintendent, and not himself feel their power; he will either give up the work entirely, or submit his heart to Christ.—*Ralph Wells.*

Not every Christian teacher is alike adapted to the special work of leading the children directly to Christ; I would not, for that reason, however, reject their services. Many a worthy young lady, though herself unconverted, by faithfully teaching the theology and morals of Christianity in the Sunday school, is contributing powerfully to the work of evangelizing the world. Employ converted teachers if you have them, but by no means discard the volunteer services of any well-meaning and well-informed members of the congregation. A thousand times better these than none!—*J. E. King, D. D., Fort Edward, N. Y.*

RETAINING THE OLDER SCHOLARS.—My present class consists of thirty girls, whose ages vary from fifteen to

twenty-five. Two have been with me ever since I took the class. The average attendance is twenty-two. I think that the success of an adult class depends very much upon the personal influence and regularity of the teacher. I would study their feelings, and, when reproof was necessary, do it privately, and in a gentle, affectionate manner, not showing displeasure, but sorrow for their faults. A separate room is quite necessary for an adult class. The girls always prefer it, the teacher is more at home with her class, and it establishes a greater feeling of confidence and sympathy between them; but, if possible, the connection with the school should be kept up, in order to maintain love and sympathy with the other scholars and teachers. When it can be done, as it is in my own class, they should join in the singing and prayers with the rest of the school at the opening and closing. A social gathering once a year creates a good feeling, and a personal interest in their welfare, and sympathy with them in their troubles and difficulties, combined with an occasional visit to them, is sufficient to insure their attendance, respect, and attachment. Be ready always to hear their troubles and to give advice, let no partiality whatever be shown in the class, encourage the shy and timid ones to repose confidence in you, and when, through circumstances, they leave the class, keep up your influence and connection with them by an occasional letter or visit. A course of lessons is beneficial for the school, and, when teaching a junior class, I was always glad that the lesson was arranged for me; but the teachers of senior classes ought to be at liberty to teach what they think most suitable. Let Christ be the theme of all the lessons. Illustrate truths by examples from the Bible; the Old Testament is replete with them, and most girls are very ignorant of the Old Testament stories.—*Cor. Church of England Sunday School Magazine.*

After an experience of over a quarter of a century I am fully convinced that the best way to retain our elder scholars generally is to break the connection between the Bible classes and the next senior classes in the school as little as possible. Had I but two rooms at my disposal I would put all the scholars under twelve years of age in one room, and those above twelve in the other—with perhaps a curtain between the upper classes—in preference to keeping one for the boys and one for the girls. Had I three rooms, the third should be devoted to the infants and very youngest classes. But the most difficult period during which to retain our scholars is from about the age of fifteen to seventeen, when they are beginning to think themselves already men and women, and to doubt whether they are not getting too old even for a senior class in the Sunday school. For such we require a peculiarly efficient teacher, one who knows just how far to relax rules and restraint so as to give a sense of liberty without losing authority, one who can attract the scholars by interesting and comprehensive teaching, and who can hold them with the cords of love. Teachers must not confine their intercourse with their scholars to the Sunday only; much more may often be done by a quiet half hour's conversation at the teacher's own house, or while walking by the way, than by many a Sunday's lesson. An occasional friendly tea given to the class, followed by an hour's amusement, or interesting conversation, or lively reading, will be both time and money well spent. Then, again, they are now of an age to desire to be doing something themselves in the Lord's vineyard, and it must be our endeavor to find them such occupation as they may be best fitted for. In our own school we have found it most beneficial to set apart two or three classes, both of the boys and of the girls, to be taught by those who still belong to our respective Bible

classes, our plan being for some of those who are well qualified to teach to take the classes in the morning, and to attend the Bible class in the afternoon, while others, who have attended the Bible class in the morning, teach the classes in the afternoon. By this means they are gradually trained as teachers without losing the benefit of instruction for themselves, and, having only one lesson to prepare for teaching, they are the better able to do justice to their classes. In addition, the advantage of finding some useful and pleasant occupation for their leisure evenings can not be overestimated. Companionships and occupation of some sort they will find, and if, by means of mutual improvement classes, singing classes, lectures, social meetings, readings, etc., we can keep them from evil, or even questionable amusements and companions, we shall do much to further and confirm the Sunday teaching.—*Idem*.

A lawyer in Philadelphia fifteen years ago took a class of boys who very suddenly became young men, and refused to attend the school. They formed themselves into a curb-stone, or lamp-post class, and this good man saw that if they should pass finally beyond the restraints of the sanctuary they would go fast to destruction. He did not go to them and say, "Boys, you are disturbing the congregation, you are a great nuisance," and pass them sternly by. No! He said to them, "Young gentlemen, would you not like to meet me this afternoon, and spend a pleasant hour or so together?" "Yes, sir." "Where shall we go?" They found a room up in the belfry of the church. There they met him all Summer long. Often I have seen them, teacher and all, with their coats off, and joined them in their lusty choruses of praise when the swift perspiration would pursue its way down from their brows in their earnest interest and effort in singing the songs of Zion. Only

two of those more than dozen boys turned out badly. The secret of that teacher's success was in his understanding boy nature, and in his making himself one with them and of them.—*Rev. Alfred Taylor.*

Our Sunday school system does not secure *the early conversion* of more than a fraction of the children committed to its care. Its *little ones* are not generally led to Christ. If they were they would, with few exceptions, remain with the school on reaching the age of temptation. Christ formed in the heart of the *child* would prove a mighty counter-charm to the charm of the world when he became a youth. Regenerated in childhood, the pupil would meet the temptations of youth with the current of his being flowing toward God. He would turn to the Sunday school for sympathy and aid in his grand struggle with temptation, instead of running away from it into the embraces of sin. But growing up without a renewed heart, he only follows the course of nature in leaving the Sunday school when passion awakes and sinful pleasures invite. The wonder is not, therefore, that so many youth go, but that any remain, for conversion in early childhood is the only thing that either can or will put an end to this general hegira of our older scholars.—*D. Wise, D. D.*

WHY TEACHING IS NOT ENJOYED.—I never knew a teacher who came to his class without suitable preparation to enjoy teaching; and I never knew one who was always prepared to dislike it.—*Waldo Abbott.*

QUESTION BOOKS.—I have published a great many question books, and have made several myself, but between an intelligent teacher and a bright class, *any* question book is as out of place as an iceberg between two lovers.—*Frederick Packard.*

Question books are like dogs ; they should be left at home, not brought to the Sabbath school.—*J. H. Vincent.*

LIBRARY BOOKS.—There is wide difference of opinion as to the character of the books which should be allowed in the Sunday school library. Shall books of secular interest be allowed, or only those of a purely religious character? In this respect there are two things to be noted : 1st. The difference between town and country. In a place where the Sunday school library is the only one accessible to the children, and where books are scarce in their houses, I would give very wide latitude to the choice ; while in the city, where every house almost is crammed with books, and there are many libraries open to all, I would restrict the Sunday school library more closely. 2d. The last few years have furnished us with an admirable Sunday school literature ; and there is no need of going outside of religious works to find interesting volumes.—*R. W. Raymond, Brooklyn, N. Y.*

THE KEY OF PRAYER.—It was on the Sabbath morning, as the day broke upon the poor pilgrims in Doubting Castle, that Christian, “as one awake,” said, “What a fool I am ! Am I to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty ? I have a key in my bosom called Promise, that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting Castle.” That key opened the dungeon door, and, though it went desperately hard, the lock of the iron gate also, and the prisoners went forth on to the king’s highway. Have we no key of promise ? What may we not ask ?—what not expect to receive ? Augustine said of his mother, “She beset me with prayer ; I could not withstand her prayers.” Do we deal thus with our children—personally, privately, individually ? Do we know

what "praying and working" is? Those men who are engaged in sculpturing that solid marble architrave daily sharpen their tools, and ascend the scaffold to advance their work; soon, however, the tools are blunted, and they come down again to repeat the process. Ours is a work worth doing well. We can not do it without the Lord's help. Take apostolic example. The Epistles were their teachings. They begin them and close them with prayer, and the whole instruction is saturated with this spirit. Take out *your* key, you who say you are discouraged by want of success, and overcome with doubts, and fears, and reluctances, and use it as Christian did—plead the precious promises, ask the help you need, and the blessing you lack, and wait till you receive it; yea, "prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Already the answer comes to the Christian teacher, "Behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, and make known my words unto you!"—*Charles Reed.*

ORGANIZING A SCHOOL.—In every neighborhood where there can be gathered together a dozen adults and children combined, a school can be established. For a room, a farmer's kitchen, a blacksmith's shop, a barn, or a grove, have often been used, and can be again: 1. *Plan your work.* Look over your field, talk with your neighbors, select the more accessible and convenient place, visit every family, and see that *every person*, old and young, is invited to attend. Do all that you can to make the place attractive and beautiful. Be sure that every one who comes shall see that efforts have been made to make them not only welcome, but happy when there. If possible, get every one to work in some department for the good

of the school. Give out a lesson for the next Sabbath, invite all who feel interested to remain after the regular exercises close, and consult about plans for the future ; then, having recorded the names of all present, and made a minute of the session, close the school, repeating the Lord's Prayer in concert. 2. *Next organize.* Nothing can be done without a leader, or superintendent. Choose the person best qualified, whether man, woman, or child. If but few are present, and it is believed others will shortly come in, elect temporarily ; but as a rule, those who start the enterprise are best qualified to carry it on till fairly established. Say, choose the person having the most *faith*, most love for the young, and the best-natured person. Some lady superintendents are very efficient and very successful, and there are instances of children organizing and directing schools to a successful and blessed issue. Having chosen a superintendent, never elect other officers till he shall have been consulted in reference to them ; adjourn, with a purpose to work during the week for the success of the school.—*B. F. Jacobs.*

THE NO STUDENTS.—I stood by the side of a Sunday school teacher, not long since, who was discoursing upon the killing of Abel by Cain. He said, among other silly things, "This, my dear children, is what they call a *par-ricide!*" We will grant that the teacher is very much occupied. But the most careful teachers are the most occupied, and *in every school the teachers who most of all prepare their lessons are those who have in their condition the most excuse for not being prepared.* I will find you some seamstress girl whose whole time is taken up by her ten fingers in making a living for herself and her mother, who comes to the house of God and the Sunday school more intelligent, better prepared, with a more thorough

study of the lesson than many a daughter of wealth, or position, or elevation in society whom the Lord has honored by calling to a knowledge of his truth. The one deeply feels the responsibility of the privilege; the other feels as if the privilege were a condescension. The one acknowledges that it is, most of all, a great and glorious work; the other feels as if it were something that could be readily set aside for other claims. Who are the workers in the Church? They are our poor people. And if our rich members ever come to give in proportion to the gifts of the poor, the whole treasury of beneficence will be flooded. Not long since I gave an incidental notice of a want I wished to relieve. The rich were there, the poor were there. The gifts brought in were voluntary offerings. The largest gift put into my hands was by a poor working girl, who has nothing of earth but what God gives her in return for her labor, and who earnestly and affectionately entreated me to receive it, though I said, "It is monstrous; you can not afford it!" I remember a young man in one of our seminaries who came to me and said, "I have been trying very hard to write a sermon, and I find it the most difficult thing in the world to do." I said to him, "My dear young friend, were you ever at a mill? Do you know what the hopper and the bin are? Suppose the miller should rouse his hands, set the stones going, hang his bags on the hooks at the bin, and then stand wondering why he does not get any meal. Some one says to him, 'Why, you have forgotten to put corn in the hopper!' My dear young man, you can not get meal at the bin till you put corn in the hopper." So, my dear teacher, you can not teach till you yourself are taught, and the only way of preparing to teach is by studying and learning yourself, by engaging in this work every day, faithfully and effectually.—*S. H. Tyng, D. D.*

PREPARING THE LESSON.—Begin early in the week, and thus keep the lesson before the mind while walking the streets, or riding along the road, or plowing the field. Fresh thoughts will thus be developed, and the whole subject will be impressed on the mind with the vividness of a sun-picture. First read the lesson and its context over carefully. Consult, with the help of your reference Bible, the parallel passages. Make a memorandum of every one which may serve to illustrate the lesson. A memorandum book will be found useful. Take each verse by itself, and get out of each all you can. After thus making notes on each verse, the ideas may be expanded, classified, and arranged in proper order. The one great truth of the lesson may be set forth, and the chief points arranged under it. Note especially those points in the lesson which will probably be the hardest for the scholars to understand. Give, also, attention to all allusions to ancient manners and customs, and to Bible geography and history. As to commentaries, do not begin your lesson by consulting one. Do your own thinking thoroughly first, and afterward go to authorities.—*Rev. J. M. Freeman.*

Take the subject early in the week. Think about it. Pray over it. Let it undergo the process of incubation, and by the time you have brooded over it a week it will be warm in your own heart, and be presented warm, fresh, and glowing to your scholars' hearts. Gather illustrations. Jot down incidents in your note-book—incidents occurring in the home circle, in the street, every-where. Consider your children—their habits, characters, circumstances—that you may know what things will most impress them. Adapt your teaching—concentrate. Take out the one cardinal thought of the lesson, and press it upon the mind and heart. Study the art of questioning, but never take a question book into the class. Close the lesson with your

best and strongest thought. Keep the best to the last. In brief, *get* the lesson, *impart* the lesson, *impress* the lesson.—Rev. Henry C. M'Cook, St. Louis.

1. *Remember, always, the great end proposed.* You do not come to occupy your class for thirty minutes in hearing a recitation from the question book, the catechism, or even the Bible itself. You come to teach. 2. *Begin all your preparation with your own heart.* Many teachers lay out a good plan of analysis, study up the parallel passages, look out the references, get together the facts, and yet their hearts are like icebergs all the while. God has put the windows of the soul on the heart side of the body. You must train your heart toward God, if you want your intellect on God's side. You may understand the doctrine of justification by faith through two processes—from the study of it in God's Word, or having been taught it out of the catechism, but better still by having felt the pardon in your own heart. This heart-knowledge is invaluable to you throughout all your Bible-teaching. It establishes the needed sympathy between teacher and scholar. 3. *Begin all preparation with prayer.* Photographers hunt for rooms in upper stories; they seek the sky-lights. Always have the sky-light, teachers. "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." *Never* neglect prayer. 4. *Get all the facts of the lesson.* Seek to be accurate in your knowledge of the lesson; then commit to memory the words of it, and get the sentiment in your heart and mind. Do not go to books till you have first viewed and reviewed the lesson without outside helps. 5. *By the hard process of thinking draw out the particular teachings of the lesson—its doctrines and practical points.* Isaac Newton said, "I keep holding a subject before me, and it gradually opens, and I see into it." Just here, the Church owes much to the

Sunday school in the intellectual activity which it has compelled and drawn forth. 6. *Select one great, central lesson*, and say to yourself, that one lesson I will teach. Do not try to teach too much. Concentrate! 7. *Study your lesson with reference to your scholars*. Have your scholars' names on the blank leaf in your Bible, or between the Old and New Testaments, and open it before you as you bow on your knees in prayer. Pray for each scholar according as his need is. Teach each scholar what he needs to know. Adaptation is the true law. Do not give instruction "in the lump," but in "assorted lots." Do not do as a zealous but mistaken tract distributor in an army hospital, who was startled to hear a peal of uproarious laughter from a soldier's cot, followed by the words, "I have lost both my legs, and you have given me a tract on dancing!" 8. *Prepare a plan of teaching before you go to your class*. Allow your scholars to talk and to ask questions, but bring them round to the right point. Lead them and control them. 9. *Resist manfully the discouragements you meet*. When you hear and see high standards set up, do not turn away from them sadly and weakly, but use what you may, learn what you can, practice what you believe is good and attainable, and you will be led higher. But know this, that if your heart is right, God will guide you, and your intellect will develop ripely and richly under heart-culture while you study God's Word. 10. *Close your preparation as you began, with earnest prayer*. Prayer beginning, prayer continuing, prayer ending; prayer all the way through the preparation, and prayer while you are teaching what you have prepared.—*Rev. J. H. Vincent.*

APPLY AS YOU PROCEED.—In my early teaching experience I used to bring all the "application" in at the end.

Have you never noticed, in the matter of sermons and speeches, that while the speaker was in the midst of his descriptions and illustrations the hearers were deeply interested, but as soon as the "application" came the feet and hands began to be restless and moving? What was the matter? O, the "application" had been reached. And have you never heard a little child say, as its mother progressed in the reading of a story-book to the lesson which was appended as a moral at the close of each chapter, "O, mother, skip that and go on with the story!" I have, many times. Now, in your class, teacher, one of two things will almost always happen if you leave the "application" to the end of the lesson: either the superintendent's rap on the desk will warn you to cease from your teaching, or the children will, through habit, fail to give the attention you have thus far sustained, and they will not receive the "application." Bring it in, then, as you go along, layer after layer, underlaying and overlaying all your instruction, and it will do its work, by the Divine blessing.—*Ralph Wells.*

SUSTAIN THE SABBATH SCHOOL.—If the Sabbath school had no reference to the ultimate conversion of the children—if it did not look at all to the future connection of the scholars with the visible Church—I would still say to every parent, and every citizen, and every well-wisher of society, Sustain it! Sustain it by your money, counsel, and presence. Why? Because, of all the conservative influences brought to bear on society in the nineteenth century, I know of none greater than the Sabbath school. It is a well-established fact that man's physical and intellectual nature demands cessation from ordinary labor one-seventh of his time—that he can and will do more in six days, one week with another, for years, than if he were to work regularly the seventh day. It is just as fully

established that what man needs for recuperation is not so much entire freedom from physical or mental exercise as a change to that kind that will meet a felt want of his nature not met in ordinary work. The Sabbath school does this precisely. It combines, at once, pleasant mental discipline with social and moral influences which have a strengthening and purifying effect on both body and mind. But, besides this, leaving out of view the religious element, Sabbath school instruction imbeds in the youthful heart a system of morals which is acknowledged by all, even infidels, as being purer and more elevating than any ever given to man—a system which, accepted and acted upon, always throws a charm around the domestic circle, vitalizes and strengthens all the better impulses of our nature, restrains and controls our passions, removing strife and discord, making better husbands, wives, parents, children, and citizens; and, because they do, they conserve, in a pre-eminent degree, the interests of society, and ought, therefore, to be sustained from considerations entirely outside of their religious bearings.—*Rev. James F. Chalfant.*

SEVEN PRINCIPLES.—1. Never teach what you do n't quite understand; 2. Never tell a child what you can make him tell you; 3. Never give a piece of information without asking for it again; 4. Never use a hard word if an easy one will convey your meaning, and never use any word at all unless you are quite sure it has a meaning to convey; 5. Never begin an address or a lesson without a clear view of its end; 6. Never give an unnecessary command, nor one which you do not mean to see obeyed; 7. Never permit any child to remain in the class, even for a minute, without something to do, and a motive for doing it. A mind unoccupied is a mind in mischief.—*J. G. Fitch, Esq.*

FORMING A MISSION SABBATH SCHOOL.—Find a single man or woman whose heart is in the project. Determine, with the help of God, to do it. Next obtain assistants who are equally engaged or interested in the work with yourself. Thirdly, get a place to meet—a hall, building, or room—the best you can get. Then combine your teachers—get them together to plan, pray, and talk over the work before them. Then go out around you. Visit the neighborhood—all the families. As the scholars and parents come in, one by one, open your classes. God will bless you if you are faithful.—*E. D. Jones.*

PUNISHMENTS.—If the child is stubborn, and refuses to come to you, be *very* firm, and by no means let her govern you. Carry her in your arms from her seat rather than not have her obey; but never shame a child. When the class is dismissed detain the little offender, and, in privacy, take her upon your lap, talk to her with the greatest kindness about her sin and naughty ways, and show her, by *manifested* love, how very grieved you are that she forgot that she came to Sunday school to learn about Jesus, and not to play; but *impress* her, also, fully and thoroughly, that she *must* be obedient whenever you speak; then, with an affectionate “good-by,” tell her you think she will never do so again. We do not remember, after having had an experience with children of every rank of society, of every temperament and grade of understanding, of a single instance when this had to be repeated a second time. If the offense is *very* grave, a visit to the child at its home, during the week, and personal labor there, will rarely fail to accomplish that which will not be forgotten during a lifetime. A single interview has sometimes transformed very stubborn little ones into the best-behaved scholars in the school.—*Mrs. Mary C. Johnson.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL MUSIC.—1. Never sing for pastime or recreation in Sabbath school. We have no time for this; besides, we have a higher and holier mission for our songs. 2. Sing while you sing, *and do nothing else*. Books, papers, lessons, should all be laid aside. Superintendent, teachers, and scholars should all engage *heartily* in the exercise. 3. The teacher of the singing should know, as far as possible, the spiritual state of the school, so that the songs may be selected with reference to it. If faith is lacking, he should sing about faith. If energy and life are needed, he should sing some lively, soul-stirring song that will wake up and enliven all. Every *right* song has a mission more than to jingle sweetly, and if we use it in the right place, and in the right spirit sing it, it will become a power with God, and be a means of winning souls to Christ. The good effects of a sermon or speech are often neutralized because followed by some unsuitable hymn. Bring your song out with power, in the *right place*, and it will do its work with effect. 4. Every Sabbath school should have its regular weekly singing meeting, so as to improve in the divine art. Thus, too, it will learn new pieces, so as to have a fine and large variety for all occasions. 5. In introducing a new hymn, care should be taken that the sentiment and movement be fully understood, so that all may see its points, and feel an interest in it.—*Philip Phillips*.

THE TRUE VALUE OF TEACHER TRAINING.—Without doubt *heart* is the grand requisite, and *heartlessness* the capital defect in a Sunday school teacher. Let us go farther. There is danger, unquestionably great danger, that many Sunday school teachers may come to depend too much upon their training, and forget the necessity of spiritual preparation for their great work. But after

admitting all this, it does not prove that training is of no consequence, if you have earnestness. It may be true that a man of fiery energy will fell more trees in a day, with an ax battered and edgeless, than a sluggard will with the most perfect and polished instrument; but it is not true that the earnest man would not accomplish more by striking equally vigorous blows with a better implement. "Some men," says Mr. Beecher, "will do more with a jackknife than others with a whole chest of tools." Very true, doubtless, but that is no reason why all chests of tools should be tossed into the sea, and the civilization of the world go back to jackknives. Let not an ostentatious and heartless culture be substituted for spiritual earnestness. But let us seek culture and lose none of our zeal; let us find the best methods and be none the less diligent; let us have the best implements and use them with the most tireless industry.—*Rev. Edward Eggleston.*

COMPETENT AND INCOMPETENT TEACHERS.—A well-selected and judiciously distributed staff of teachers is essential to a successful Sabbath school. Fitness for the office requires natural sympathy with, and adaptation to the mind and wants of childhood; ability to expound, illustrate, and enforce Scripture truths; and what may be called Sunday school enthusiasm. To secure competent teachers the following means have proved efficient:

1st. By close attention to the general conduct of the school, and its general exercises, not only draw a large and constantly increasing number of visitors, but create in them a desire to be identified with you in the work.

2d. Through the pastor, or otherwise, keep the mission of the Sunday school, and the obligation of members thereunto, prominently before the Church and congregation.

3d. In connection with your school, have a Bible class, conducted in such a manner as to constitute a training school for teachers.

4th. Have also a teachers' conference and prayer meeting, to which the members of the training class should be invited. These meetings generate a spiritual atmosphere, which elevates the mind and heart of the teachers, and fills them with enthusiasm for the work. This result is further attained by inducing your teachers to attend Sabbath school conventions and meetings, and teachers' institutes.

5th. Let the executive management of the school be so firm, impartial, and courteous as to banish all cliques, social distinctions, and favoritism from the school.

As it is of the highest importance to secure and retain competent teachers, it is equally necessary to weed out the incompetent. Incompetence takes the following prominent forms :

1st. Want of natural sympathy and adaptation—intellectual or spiritual.

2d. Want of regularity and punctuality in attendance.

3d. Trifling and frivolous behavior, and lack of Christian consistency.

4th. A captious, complaining, and insubordinate disposition.

In dealing with a seeming want of natural adaptation, a wise discrimination is needed to determine whether it is the result of incurable defect, or whether we simply need to place the individual in the right place. Teachers who totally fail in controlling and instructing a class of boys or girls, as the case may be, have been eminently successful with the opposite sex. And, further, a person may have no adaptation to class instruction, and in the right place do good service as an officer. If after trial and

consideration, natural defects can not be overcome, the superintendent must choose the alternative of requesting the resignation of the teacher, rather than allow the interests of the scholar to suffer.

Want of regularity and punctuality has been lessened, and even entirely overcome, by calling a roll of the teachers at the commencement of the school exercises. In our school we have been much aided by two rules, adopted by our teachers, and which are in substance as follows : 1. If a teacher is absent at the close of the opening exercises—2.40, P. M.—the class for the remainder of the school session is at the disposal of the superintendent, and the teacher is expected cheerfully to remain as a visitor, or accept any other service to which he may be assigned. 2. If a teacher is absent two Sundays in succession, without notifying the superintendent, and furnishing a valid excuse, the class is at the disposal of the officers.

Trifling and frivolous behavior and a lack of Christian consistency needs kind admonition ; and if persisted in, a firm request for resignation ; but it is frequently overcome by the influence of the teachers' conference and prayer meeting, and the Christian influence of the more experienced and faithful teachers. A captious, complaining, insubordinate spirit must be overcome by firm and impartial management, and a superintendent, whose personal influence is not sufficient to insure the moral support of the teachers, in a disinterested administration of the affairs of the school, owes it to himself and to the cause he represents, to give place to some one who can secure that harmony without which spiritual advancement is impossible.—*Rev. B. Frankland, Sup't. Bethel School, Cin.*

THE SUPERINTENDENT.—His sympathy for youth and faith in childhood must irresistibly attract to him young

and old alike, yet his devotion and respect for the Master's cause forbid undue familiarity. His consecration to the work leading him to frequent surrender of time, convenience, personal ease, social festivities, business arrangements, and often to the expending of money and labor, will speak more than mere words can do of his estimate of the Sabbath school as an evangelizing agency, and prevent, upon the part of both officers and scholars, any disposition to make the school a mere means of pastime or entertainment. The immediate conversion of the impenitent, and the training for Jesus of those converted, he will thus, by example joined to precept, make the prominent and paramount object of his school. Any lower standard than this he will make all to feel is trifling with sacred things, and a desecration of God's holy day. His executive talent must secure the order and discipline of a man-of-war, while his facility in securing the coöperation of others, and of imbuing them with his own spirit, more than compensate for the absence of the rules and regulations of the department. His knowledge of the principles and practice of teaching must enable him to instruct the teachers in the most forcible, effective, and engaging methods of presenting truth to their young and plastic charge. By reason of his spirit of enterprise he will keep pace with all advances in the Sabbath school cause, of which, of late, it is showing itself so prolific, and will suffer no opportunity to pass unimproved of having his school creditably represented in all appropriate bodies. Ripe Christian experience must make him a suitable counselor of the young, and bring him into close, confidential, and tender sympathy with all who seek or will receive his encouragement. His reputation, as far as possible, should be without aspersion, and his character such that the association of his name with the school shall be to the community a

favorable recommendation, and, with the Divine blessing, a token of its success and fidelity to the great purposes of its organization. His relations with his pastor should be of the most intimate and confidential nature, that all may be done in entire harmony with the pulpit, God's appointed means of bringing the world to Christ. He must needs be a man living in constant communion with the blessed Savior, to whose glory his life is consecrated; for, without his blessing, human nature is inadequate to the sublime responsibilities of this position. He must be one who has learned to govern himself, and who, in the midst of circumstances most perplexing, can remain tranquil and composed.

Is it thought the standard is too high, and can not be attained? It is no higher than the cause deserves and the work demands. By God's grace, it is attainable; without his blessing the ablest human instrumentality is but a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. All things are possible to him that believeth. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Let every superintendent remember the words of Moses, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."—*Philip G. Gillett, M. D., Jacksonville, Ill.*

THE WAY WE WORK OUR MISSION SCHOOL.—The whole district occupied by the school is divided into sections. Each of these sections is intrusted to the care of a visitor selected from among the teachers or officers. It is made the duty of each teacher to look after his own class, but in addition to their care is that of the visitor, who is supposed to know who are occupants of every house in his section, to collect all the pupils these houses will afford, and to seek for the wanderers. The name and age of every

scholar, the place of his residence, and the names of his parents or guardians are registered on the day of his first appearance in the school. When he has been a member of the school four Sundays he receives a certificate of membership. Every Sunday the register of his class shows whether he is present, whether he has a perfect lesson, and how many verses of Scripture he has recited on that day. The class registers, collected by the division managers, are copied into the books of the school, so that a glance will reveal the school history of each pupil. When any pupil has been absent two successive Sundays his name and address are given to the visitor of that section of the district in which he resides. The duty of the visitor is to ascertain the cause of his absence, and, if possible, bring him back. Every Friday evening a prayer meeting is held in the room of the "infant department." Usually, a meeting is held in the principal room on Sunday evening, when a sermon is preached. The plan of the school involves the employment of an ordained missionary, whose whole time shall be given to work upon the field—to pastoral labor during the week, and to preaching on Sunday.—*Z. M. Humphrey, D. D.*

NUMBERS.—In 1816 the New York Sunday School Union was established, and in 1824 the American Sunday School Union. In 1861 there were in Great Britain and Ireland 3,600,000 pupils, and 340,000 teachers in the various schools. In the same year it is estimated that there were in the United States 3,000,000. At the present time there are doubtless 4,000,000 children in our Sunday schools, and 400,000 teachers.—*Waldo Abbot.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

TACT.—Love swings on little hinges. It keeps an active little servant to do a good deal of its fine work. The name of the little servant is *Tact*. Tact is nimble-footed and quick-fingered; tact sees without looking; tact has always a good deal of small change on hand; tact carries no heavy weapons, but can do wonders with a sling and stone; tact never runs its head against a stone wall; tact always spies a sycamore-tree up which to climb when things are becoming crowded and unmanageable on the level ground; tact has a cunning way of availing itself of a word, or a smile, or a gracious wave of the hand; tact carries a bunch of curiously fashioned keys which can turn all sorts of locks; tact plants its monosyllables wisely, for, being a monosyllable itself, it arranges its own order with all the familiarity of friendship; tact—sly, versatile, diving, running, flying tact—governs the great world, yet touches the big baby under the impression that it has not been touched at all.

Mrs. Horace Mann tells of being in a mission infant class room once when the general question of “how many of you wish to be good” was put. Every hand except that of a new-comer, a boy of six, went up. The teacher put the question again, in hopes the boy—having, perhaps, misunderstood her—would also hold up his hand. But he refused. She was on the point of scolding him, when Mrs. Mann, begging leave to speak, quietly walked to the

child, put her arm around his neck, and asked him if he knew what it was to be good. With a face full of unspeakable infantile woe, and his eyes and throat overrunning and choking, he cried out, "'Ter to be whipped." He was the child of a mother who always brought goodness to her children by the rod, and hence the child's misapprehension. The tact of Mrs. Mann was worth a thousand scoldings.

A Michigan superintendent was a railroad station-master. One day he detected four bad boys stealing sugar from a hogshead in a freight car. He locked the boys in, and, as the only condition of releasing them and hushing the matter up, he required them to join his Sabbath school. They did so, and in a few weeks three of those four boys united with the Church. Some other superintendents might have had them in the hands of the police within an hour, without concern as to the moral results.

Bishop Janes, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in addressing a class of young ministers, said: "If the people have a prejudice, it is best to flank, and not to storm it. You will never lose any thing by tact, by gentleness, by kindness, patience, and love." What is true in the case of the minister is true in that of the Sunday school superintendent in his relations to his teachers and scholars, and of the teachers in their relations to their scholars. Have the serpent's wisdom and the dove's harmlessness, and success is yours beyond peradventure.

DEVELOP ALL.—A fault too common in superintendents and others in addressing or reviewing the school is to allow a few bright boys or girls to do all the responding. They never seem to know that one-half or three-fourths of the school are silent, or have been silent all the time of the address or review. In a school where we happened to be a visitor, three persons delivered

addresses. The first and second indulged in a sort of catechetical discourse, the "leading" question predominating. Four boys in a corner did nineteen-twentieths of the responding, and the speakers each complimented the school on its perfect knowledge of the Scriptures. The third speaker pursued a different course. He asked the boys in the corner to be quiet while he tried the left-hand side of the house, composed chiefly of the smaller girls and boys. Not a response could he at first obtain from them. At last, by simple questions, he reassured them, and in the course of ten minutes had the satisfaction of knowing that perhaps one-half of them understood the main points which speakers No. 1 and 2 pronounced the whole school thoroughly to comprehend. The bright scholars are bright enough to care for themselves. Look after those who are half afraid of you and themselves.

REWARDS AND TICKETS.—One of the largest and most successful Sunday schools in the country has the following ticket system: The scholars in attendance each Sunday receive a ticket, printed on a *red* card; for the perfect recitation of the Sabbath lesson, which consists of six verses, a *green* ticket; for every six verses of Scripture recited in *addition* to the Sabbath lessons, and only after the Sabbath lesson has been recited, a *white* ticket; for every new scholar introduced, a red ticket of larger size than the first named. For any six of the tickets thus described, a *blue* ticket, for sake of convenience, is given in exchange when called for, bearing on its face, across the center, "*exchange ticket.*" On the second Sabbath of January, April, July, and October, the tickets are redeemed thus: twenty exchange tickets for a Bible; ten for a Testament; or if these are not desired, a book of equal value is given. The system, says the superintendent

of the school, has secured regularity in attendance, systematic study of the Scriptures, and the introduction and retention of a large number of new scholars.

FURNISHING THE LIBRARY.—Have a permanent committee, composed of the pastor, the superintendent, the librarian, and one or two teachers. This committee should have the power to add to the library, *at all times*, such books as they please. Thus, every week or two a few new books are found in the library, keeping it constantly fresh, and the children have no reasonable complaints to make. The labors of such a committee would be both lightened and strengthened if they could correspond with, or visit, some of the places of supply of Sabbath school literature, and having confidence in the judgment of those who publish, or have selected, *the best* books, could get from them from time to time such as they recommend. A standing order might be given to a few sources of supply, to send all the good new books as they might be issued, with the liberty always of returning such as are not approved by the committee.

It is thought by some that the only kind of books that children will read are sensational stories. If this is true, it would be far better that children should read less, and read that which will do them some good. There are many really valuable books that will be read, and these should be carefully sought for. Children will read, and if not furnished with exciting stories, rather than not read at all, they will read more solid books.

WHEN SHALL THEY BEGIN?—If children do not begin *early* to attend Church, when shall they begin? Shall it be at twelve years, or thirteen, or fifteen; and, if you fix it at twelve or fifteen, will it be easier then to form the habit

than it would be at five, or eight, or ten? In a certain Church in a New England town, where, for years, the parents and teachers have been urged to see that the children, of all ages, attend at least one preaching service upon Sabbath, as well as the Sabbath school, there has been a large increase of the Church membership from the Sabbath school. In another society of a different denomination, in the same town, where the children seldom or never go to Church, the accessions to the Church from the school have been few.

Habit rules with power in the young as well as in the old heart. The girl who, from the time she enters the infant class to the day of her graduating into the Bible class, has been excused from attending Church service has really no inclination to attend, and it will require effort almost superhuman to persuade her. One of the teachers belonging to the Sabbath school in connection with Mr. Spurgeon's Church, in a printed record of observation extending over fifteen years, states that it is best for children to be taken to Church when quite young, no matter though they may not understand all that the minister says, and no matter if now and then they even go to sleep. Here is where the Churches lose power. The children have gone to Sabbath school, and then, from one consideration or another, have not been required to attend the preaching, and so, by the time that the habit ought to have been formed, the opposite has found firm footing.

CONFERENCE OF SUPERINTENDENTS.—There was a conference of Sunday school superintendents, teachers, and officers at Edinburgh, Scotland, October 21, 1867, the following points being discussed and agreed on:

1. There should be rotation in the devotional exercises. Superintendents and teachers should take their turns.

2. Mutual understanding between superintendents and teachers. While the superintendent is free to speak to his teachers, the teachers ought to be as free in speaking to him. A teacher once told a superintendent that his prayers were uniformly too long, and asked him to time himself next time. The suggestion was given pleasantly and taken pleasantly. A reform followed. Cordial fellowship between superintendent and teachers is a guarantee of regular attendance on the part of the latter.

3. Preparation for devotion. Every superintendent ought to select and study his hymns and prayers before coming to the school, doing nothing at random.

4. Visits to other schools. As it is good for teachers from time to time to visit each other's schools and classes and see how the teaching is done, so ought superintendents see each other's schools, and by such exchange of visits not only gain useful hints, but be sent back to their own spheres with a fresh impulse.

5. Adequate supply of teachers. Calls from the pulpit may be well enough, but the superintendent should, by personal inquiry, know as to the fitness of every new teacher employed.

6. Dismissal. Number the classes, and let them leave in rotation.

7. Addresses. As far as possible, let them be cognate to the lesson studied.

MISSION SCHOOLS IN LARGE CITIES.—In St. Louis, Chicago, and other cities where mission schools have been established on a broad scale, nothing noticeable has ever been accomplished on the Union basis. It is different in great centers from what it is in sparsely populated districts or small towns, where, in many cases, no one denomination has power, of itself, to sustain an organization.

It was not till the union method was abandoned, and each denomination took up the work by itself, through its local Churches, that perceptible progress was made in Chicago. The benefit of the independent plan is threefold: it excites a generous and healthy emulation within each denomination, as well as between denominations; it throws responsibility upon the local Church, and thus draws out all its resources of men and money; and it connects the results with an individual Church, so that the harvest is carefully garnered. At the same time, this plan places no obstacle whatever in the way of fraternal intercourse and coöperation of denominations, which meet together in conventions to compare methods, report progress, and unite in prayer. By this earnest denominational labor—on the plan of Nehemiah for building the walls of Jerusalem, every man over against his own house—an unparalleled success has been obtained, without any abridgment of freedom or zeal in the advocacy of peculiar views, and without any interruption of fraternal feelings between the various sects. Thus each school is on the broad basis of all that it believes, while it maintains the most friendly relations with the others.

CHILDREN'S MEETINGS.—Our children's meetings are too often defective in the line of unity of theme discussed. If there should be three or four speakers, the probability is that there will be as many different topics as speakers. Let, then, the theme be arranged beforehand, and let every speaker have the opportunity of preparation. If the topic should happen to be "The Necessity of seeking the Savior while Young," let A, B, C, and D each speak to "The Necessity of seeking the Savior while Young," not select a subject of his own, or tell some stories that have no relevancy to the occasion.

RED CURTAINS.—Many of the Sunday schools in England and Scotland, by a simple wood or wire frame-work on which a red curtain is placed, manage to give every class a sort of separate little room. At the tap of the bell the curtains can be instantly drawn, and all the classes are together again as one.

MARKING THE ROLL.—Some superintendents always mark their own roll-books, going from class to class. The teachers are seldom interrupted, for in time the superintendent comes thus to know every scholar in the school.

THE BROOM-CORN HOERS.—We occasionally find persons who manifest an unwillingness to teach because they can not do the work as well as others. If men were generally to act on this principle, all industrial pursuits would cease. In every department of society there are a few who excel the mass; but because of this, nobody votes that the few shall do all of the toil. When we were a boy our father was engaged largely in broom-corn raising. The corn was sowed in rows, and after coming up and reaching a certain height it was to be rid of weeds, and itself thinned in shoots by the hoe. It was laborious and dextrous work to hoe ten long rows in a forenoon; but there was one man in the neighborhood, Lafayette Simpson, who could accomplish the feat. Lafayette was the pride as well as the envy of a large group of lesser lights in the broom-corn hoeing fraternity, but because he could make his ten rows in five hours was no excuse for non-hoeing on the part of those who could accomplish but six or eight rows. It was almost pitiful to see one great awkward boy, by the name of Jacob Spring, lagging behind all others. "But I do my work well," replied he to

a taunt from a fellow-hoer; "and I can hoe more to-day than I did yesterday, and one of these days I'll hoe as much as the best of you." Such a spirit should possess all workers. Whoever in the Sabbath school, or other field of toil, resolves to do his work well, and to do more "to-day" than he did "yesterday," will succeed. Nothing can keep him back. Jacob Spring redeemed his promise in regard to his hoeing. The second season he was up in skill to the best hoers in the neighborhood. Men can if they will; the great trouble is *they will not will*.

It is in the trial of the gymnast that strong muscle is developed. It is in the trial of man to please and win, that moral grace and symmetry are attained. Let not one falter or grow disheartened. The field may be large and unpromising, but there is a place for every worker; there are furrows to be turned, stumps to be dug up, brush to be carried, briers to be cut, seed to be planted, a hundred different things for a hundred different hands. But in the end comes the harvest—the glorious, bountiful harvest. Who would not labor, however little might seem to be done by his hands, if he only knew the Lord was laboring by his side, and that the harvest was to be immortal souls? As teacher, you can not now see the fruit of your labor, but you will hereafter.

PRESIDENT HARRISON'S VIEW.—President Harrison taught for several years in a humble Sabbath school on the banks of the Ohio. The Sabbath before he left home for Washington, to assume the duties of Chief Magistrate of the nation, he met his Bible class as usual; and his last counsel on the subject to his gardener at Washington, when advised to keep a dog to protect his fruit, was, "Rather set a Sabbath school teacher to take care of the boys."

MONOTONY BROKEN UP.—There was a certain lady, teacher of an infant class, who, feeling the value of lodging the Scriptures early in the minds of her forty little scholars, required *each one separately, each Sabbath*, to recite the lesson. For two years she tramped this treadmill, to her own discouragement and weariness, and the fretting and worrying of the poor, restless children. A friend suggested, "Why not, Mrs. B., have a *part* of your school recite together?" "How shall I know whether all have committed the lesson?" "Suppose you call on the last row to rise and recite in concert; then the first row; then call upon a few at the end of the bench; then upon John, and James, and Mary, and Susan—three or four scholars—to recite alone; then ask all the children who do *not* know their lesson *perfectly* to hold up their hands; afterward, those who *do* know it. Thus you will find out pretty nearly who do not know the lesson. Next Sabbath call particularly for those who did not know it before."

The change of plan was tried, and in a few Sabbaths the whole complexion of the school, teacher and scholars, had changed. Where before was weariness, now was pleasure; where before was lifelessness, now was vigor and sprightliness; and where before was disorder, now was completest order and harmony.

AN INFALLIBLE RECIPE.—Ring the bell often; do an excessive amount of talking on an elevated key; call frequently on the room to be still; tell how much better other schools are than your own; make a second speech; ring the bell again with a quick, jerking motion, and insist upon silence, but do not be silent yourself for an instant even. In this way you will, with absolute certainty, have a turbulent, unruly, noisy school, and you yourself, as superintendent, will be chiefly to blame for it all.

WINNING HEARTS.—Teaching speaks through the affections. I once asked a minister how he had such a singular influence over certain boys in the Sunday school. "By taking walks with them," said he. Were not those circuits round Galilee which Jesus made with his disciples walks that he took with them to prepare them for their work? It was not the walks, but the friendship, and kindly interest, and the trust that knit together that minister and those boys in chains of gold. Season with the salt of kindness the routine of verbal instruction. The truths that your scholars may not wholly appreciate will be clung to for your sake before they have mastered them for their own. "Why do you prefer to hear Mr. Brown above every other preacher?" was once asked of an old colored woman. "Because he visits and talks to me at home," was the laconic but all-satisfactory reply. Beloved teacher, do you belong to that band who talk of Christ to your scholars out of love to the Savior, and with the purpose of winning each to the Savior? If not, why not?

THE SABBATH AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.—The Sabbath is justly regarded as one of the strongest bulwarks of our free institutions; but the question of whether it shall be hallowed to such ends, or perverted to become the most mischief and corruption-breeding of all the days of the year, will in many communities be reduced to the simple question as to whether an efficient Sunday school shall be sustained or not in these communities. Where no single denomination of Christians is strong enough to sustain the institutions of the Gospel, this becomes the only practical means, not only for regular public, moral, and religious culture, but is the only way for any public recognition of the claims of the Sabbath and the claims of our higher nature.

SCHOOLS OF THE ENGLISH FRIENDS.—The report made in the Fall of 1862, respecting the condition of the Sabbath schools under the Friends in England, shows, among other things, the following:

Recruiting by the senior scholars, as a means of increasing the school, has worked with remarkable success.

Most of the schools, from the infant to the Bible class, used the uniform lesson. The Church of England, without exception, use the uniform lesson. The review by the superintendent, each morning, of the lesson studied has proved of invaluable service.

Scholars of the intermediate class were all taught in the same room, the Bible classes in separate rooms, but were brought into the general room during the superintendent's review. The different classes of the intermediate grade were in many instances separated by red or green curtains, or movable screens of wood.

Sunday school rooms, it was strongly recommended, should never be built underground or in basements, but above ground, where light and ventilation are abundant.

Several schools had been in the practice of giving tickets and rewards for new scholars brought in, the bringer and the comer each getting one, or rather the bringer one for each new scholar, and this without reference to the time the new scholar might remain in the school. The practice had proved in every case pernicious, and was now discontinued. Rewards are only given to new scholars, who continue to come regularly for at least twelve Sabbaths, and then only at the expiration of the twelve Sabbaths.

ADAPTING THE TEACHER AND SCHOLAR.—It is a mistake to place a stubborn boy with a hasty teacher, and to pack the class of a sanguine, sensitive teacher with dull

or bad boys. There is such a thing as accommodating teacher and children each to each. There are some boys and some teachers who will never get on together. They remind one of Dr. Chalmers and his horse. The Doctor, having bought the horse, found in a short time that it was necessary to part with him, for the animal had learned the trick of throwing the Doctor; and at last it came to such a pass that the horse had to be sold. The difficulty was to find a purchaser, as the Doctor's conscience would not permit him to conceal the faults of the horse. Eventually, however, a friend was persuaded to take the charger in return for a copy of the *Saint's Everlasting Rest*. On inquiring, some time after, how the horse was liked, the Doctor was not a little astonished at being told that there never was a better one. The key to the mystery was in the Doctor's awkward manner of riding. *There are teachers who ride awkwardly, and there are children who do not like it.* The superintendent can help both by a change of class.

TEACHER'S DUTIES TO THE SUPERINTENDENT.—Never speak ill of your superintendent before any member of your class, or a fellow-teacher, or before any person, indeed. If you see defects in his management or his character, nothing of gain will come to the school or yourself by your mention of them. He has much to bear, much to try his temper, much to discourage him. He often sees classes with the teacher absent; he has been compelled to reprove an unruly scholar, and reports unfriendly to him have been carried home; he has heard of some over-sensitive or discouraged teacher who has resolved to leave the school, who needs soothing; he has had promises from teachers to attend the teachers' meeting, and they have not been kept; he has seen and felt a thousand things that you

have not, and now he needs for his highest success that you and every other teacher should lend a heart of purest, clearest, warmest sympathy. Never, never, then, say or do aught that would destroy confidence in him.

PRAYER.—1. Recollect that you are to lead the thoughts of *children*.

2. Recollect that children have wants, and difficulties, and temptations *peculiar to themselves*. You may best recollect them by thinking what yours were.

3. Place yourself, so far as possible, in the circumstances of the scholars whose prayer you are leading.

4. Don't forget that Christ desires the immediate *conversion* of every scholar.

5. Remember the wants of the *school*. Is any scholar sick? Has any been injured lately by accident? Has any lost a relative recently? Has any class a teacher ill or out of town? Or, has any scholar been converted or inquiring about conversion lately? Remember such cases *especially*.

6. Use short sentences, and small, simple words, that the *youngest scholars* can understand.

7. Speak slowly, and distinctly, and animatedly, and loud enough to be heard in every part of the room.

8. *Especially, be brief*. A prayer two minutes long, followed by the Lord's prayer repeated in concert by the school, is long enough.

9. *Be sincere; be earnest*.

10. You will be benefited by *composing* such a prayer as will seem to you, when quiet and thoughtful, most appropriate to be offered in leading the school.

THE WESLEYANS OF GREAT BRITAIN ON STUDY OF THE LESSON.—“I once had occasion,” said Bishop Janes, of New York, “to ask a local preacher from Leeds how it

came that he and the local preachers of England were so apt in the quotation of the Scriptures, and in the ability to explain and defend the doctrines of the Church. He replied, 'We all study the Word of God through every day of the week. Attendance on the Sabbath school is conscientious and regular, and the scholars in all the classes study the lesson at home.' In this," continued the Bishop, "I found the secret of the stability, and Scriptural scholarship, and sound Christian character, and uniform holy living of our Wesleyan brethren. We must ourselves study the Word, and that daily, and carefully, and prayerfully, if the Word is to do us any good."

Another minister of high position in the Methodist Church in New York city stated in our hearing once that he had several English Wesleyans, men and women, in his society, and the richness and aptness of their Scriptural quotations in the prayer and social meetings were wonderful. "Nearly every other sentence in some of the prayers was a passage from the Bible, and fell upon the ear like words from heaven." "How came you, sister," said this minister one day to a middle-aged member, "to have this marvelous knowledge of the Bible?" "By study of it," was the reply. "We all studied at home, and the grown people always help the younger ones part of each day in acquiring a correct view of their next Sabbath's lesson in the Sunday school."

SUNDAY SCHOOL COLLECTIONS.—It is a question with many superintendents whether any contribution should be taken in the school to defray the current expenses for papers, cards, or other requisites. If the membership or the congregation is too small properly to furnish the school, occasional collections may be made in it for its own support; but the principal attention, all agree, should

be paid to benevolent enterprises, such as domestic and foreign missions, Sunday School Union, Bible Society, and others of like character. Children should be encouraged to give, and to make sacrifices in order to give. Their contributions should be regular and systematic. If the missionary collections are made but once a month the superintendent should give proper notice at least a week before, and urge the attention of the teachers and scholars to it. If the school is large enough to have both secretary and treasurer, the secretary should enter in his record the amounts contributed by each class, and the treasurer should pay over to the proper officers the several amounts so contributed.

It is always better to sustain the school outside of itself. This leaves the members of the school free to take all their collections for the great enterprises of the Church. The secretary should read the reports of the school every week, or at stated times if weekly is too often. Banners with appropriate devices are sometimes given by well-wishing friends to the class making the largest contributions for one year. The banner is then raised at the end of the seat where the class sits, and remains there as long as it is the "banner class," or foremost in its benevolent contributions. This practice is questionable; but in some cases, doubtless, is productive of much good in "provoking one another to love and good works."

POINTS AGREED ON.—In the Sunday school convention of the Irish Presbyterians, Belfast, Ireland, June 25, 26, 1867, at which over eight hundred delegates were present, the following points were made:

1. Every school should have at least one training class for teachers. One delegate reported a school which had

eighteen such classes. Teachers are not *preachers*, but teachers, and should, therefore, teach by asking and answering questions.

2. Attractive stories are best for infant classes, and catechism for advanced scholars.

3. Teaching is to be estimated, not by the amount of truth spoken, but by what the children take into their minds.

4. The causes of defective discipline are unsuitable rooms; over-crowded rooms; lack of punctuality; inefficiency of teachers.

5. Prayers in the Sunday school should not be more than four minutes long.

6. Sunday school music should be quick and lively, and chants should be introduced.

7. The essence of good teaching consists in skillful questioning.

THE SERMON, THE SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND THE PRAYER MEETING.—We know of two or three large Sabbath schools, where the uniform lesson is studied, and where, in addition, the minister selects as his text for the morning discourse the theme studied in the Sunday school. The prayer meeting in the evening, also, has the same direction. The plan, as far as tried, has worked well. The unity of labor has secured unity of impression.

A LIGHT ROOM.—Scarcely any thing so militates against cheerfulness and good order in the Sunday school as a dark room. Careful observers who have been in Church basement rooms can not but have observed the restlessness of the scholars. Not seeing each other's faces with ease or distinctness, nor the countenances of the officers and teachers, disorder springs up with inevitable

certainly. Light, light, light ! if you wish a quiet, a growing, an orderly, an easily managed school, furnish ventilation and light.

THE PASTOR.—If his physical strength, in connection with other duties, will permit, the pastor can be of great service as teacher of a class of young men ; but if his circumstances forbid regular class-teaching, he can still render most valuable assistance by his presence and counsel each Sabbath in the school. A pastor who is frequently absent from the school does, it may be an undesigned, yet a grave harm to all its interests. A superintendent of large experience remarks : “ While I realize my dependence upon every teacher in the school, and feel sometimes as though the loss of the humblest would be next to irreparable, yet, after all, my main dependence is upon my pastor. Without his presence and aid I feel I should be inadequate to the discharge of the responsible duties devolving upon me.”

The presence of the pastor gives to the officers and teachers confidence, and makes each scholar believe that in him he has a personal friend and director.

THE DYING MISSION SCHOLAR.—An Irish boy, a member of a New York mission school, was caught in the machinery of a factory, and in an instant had both legs broken. He was carried to the hospital. It was not needed that any body should tell him how badly he was hurt ; he knew he must die. He sent for his teacher, and unburdened his heart. He had for months loved the Savior, and had loved to sing his praise, though he had never had the courage before to tell any one but his mother, and now he wanted to sing,

“ There is a fountain filled with blood.”

Teacher and pupil sang it together, talking between the verses of Jesus, his suffering and dying for men, etc., till the last verse was reached—

“ Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I ’ll sing thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave ;”

which the teacher *finished* alone—the boy was dead ! Of what comfort and sustaining power the hymns heard and learned in Sunday school are to thousands of weary hearts eternity only can reveal.

TWO THOUSAND MILLIONS.—Over two thousand millions of dollars are paid in a single year in America for intoxicating spirits. This money given for a year and a half into the United States Treasury would extinguish the National debt.

The number of children in the Sunday schools of the United States has been estimated at about four millions, and of teachers four hundred thousand. It has been estimated further, that the cost of maintaining the Sunday schools of the country averages about sixty cents a scholar per year. This would make an aggregate of two millions, four hundred thousand dollars for Sunday school expenses, which is only the one-eighth hundred part of the amount paid by the people of the United States for intoxicating liquors ; that is to say, the money consumed in liquor would afford religious instruction in the Sunday school to our four hundred million of children, which is more than the juvenile population of the globe.

TEACHER AND SCHOLAR—THE TRUE RELATION.—Nobody is born a good teacher. We must all creep before we walk. If you will prayerfully study your lesson

before you go to school, and consider how to put your questions and how to explain difficulties, and, when you are in school, if you will quietly and steadily set yourself to become perfect in the art of putting questions and bringing in illustrations, and if you will always try to bring with you a kindly heart, a long-suffering temper, and a little pleasant sunshine in your countenance, then, assuredly, your labors will be blessed abundantly, both to yourself and to your children.

Your true position with respect to your scholars is that of a *friend*. It is not that of a teacher in a week-day school, where you engage for so much money to impart so much instruction, but it is that of a friend with friends, as that of a brother or sister seeking the benefit of other brothers and sisters for whom Christ died. Seek, then, to show yourself friendly with your children. Learn to speak to them pleasantly, asking after their welfare, where they live, whether they are at school during the week, if they have other brothers or sisters, whether their people at home are well, etc. Let them see that you really love them, and are willing to do them any good that lies in your power. It may, perhaps, be a small thing in itself to ask after the welfare of a little boy or girl, but it will not be a small thing if you can persuade that boy or girl that you really are his friend. It would greatly ease your labors, and, humanly speaking, bless your words to him, if you once could make him like you and trust you. Kindness is never thrown away. We mean, of course, real kindness—heart kindness; not that sort of thing which throws a penny to a beggar to get him out of your way, but sincere, honest, hearty love—that, we say, is never wasted. It enters into the real agencies at work in the world for good, and will live and work among men and women long after the bestower of it is moldering in the grave.

Who has not read the story which Douglas Jerrold has told of himself about the garden and the carnation flower? It has been in every newspaper in the land. He stood one morning, a barefoot boy, in front of a wooden fence inclosing a little garden in his native village. With longing eyes he gazed on the flowers which were blooming there quietly in the brightness of the early Sunday sunlight. The owner of the garden came out from his little cottage—he was a wood-cutter by trade, a pious, godly man. As he saw little, modest Douglas in his naked feet, he said two or three kind words in his ear, and at the same time broke from its stem one of the most beautiful of his carnations, streaked with red and white, and handed it to him. The boy accepted the gift, and with bounding steps ran home. The carnation withered on its stem, but bloomed forever afterward in Douglas Jerrold's heart!

YOUR AIM.—What is your aim? What led you to become a teacher? What are you trying to do?

Some teachers have no purpose; some look on the Sunday school as a place of recreation; some aim to "hear the lesson," and nothing more; some sincerely wish to impart instruction, but aim no higher. Dear fellow-teacher, bear with us while we press the question upon you, What are you trying to do?

If you mean nothing more than instruction in Scripture knowledge, you are short of the mark. These young and impressible spirits are in your hands. God's Word is the best instrumentality in the world for impressing them. You have a grand implement. What are you doing?

If you do not bring them to Jesus, who will? If they are not now brought to Christ, when will they be? Is it not God's will that they shall be led to Christ through your instrumentality? Christian teacher, what are you trying to do?

LOVING OUR WORST SCHOLARS.—When the opening exercises are almost over, a boy with hair uncombed and hands and face that bear only the faintest suggestion of soap and water, will come straggling into the class. His teacher tries to welcome with a kindly spoken word, but he deigns no reply. His lowering brow, his muttering tones, and sometimes impudent words, are the only explanation that he condescends to give of his tardiness and lack of preparation. His rudeness and sullenness have become unbearable. And at last the teacher comes to feel for him a positive aversion, an utter dislike. His unruly, disobedient conduct has brought forth its natural fruit, and he meets in the class with not only coldness and indifference, but a sharp and angry bitterness which speaks but too plainly of the repugnance from which it springs.

“Is it any wonder,” that teacher thinks to himself, “Is it any wonder that I can not love such a boy as that? *How can I be expected to love a bad child?*”

Dear teacher of immortal souls, it was not so that the Great Teacher taught us. He might have lavished all the love that swelled his heart upon the *angels*, for they were good, holy, loving, obedient to his will. But the choicest treasures of his tenderest love he poured out—not on the angels, not on the good, but on us—the *sinful*. “IF HE SO LOVED US, WE OUGHT ALSO TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”

ARE YOU IN EARNEST?—It is Christ's work that you are doing. He has intrusted it to you. You profess to love your Master. Are you really in earnest in your work for him?

It is a great work. Immortal souls committed to your trust; a work shared by God himself; a work for the

promotion of which Christ died; in which angels are interested. O thou, who, in God's providence, art called to work in the same field with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with the angels, with Jesus, with the Father himself—*art thou in earnest?*

The time is short. Your own life is uncertain. Your pupil is mortal. Youth ripens into manhood. The golden opportunity is fleeting. "The night cometh." Are you in earnest?

Fellow-teacher, face your own conscience, and, remembering that God is looking on your work, ask yourself the question: AM I IN EARNEST?

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

YOUTH'S PRAYER MEETINGS.—Come at the hour fixed. Never sit back near the door; come as far forward as possible. Come with hearts filled with the spirit of prayer. Bring some unconverted friend with you. Take some active part in the meeting if possible. Lead in prayer, if the Spirit of God so directs you. Speak or sing for Jesus. An appropriate verse of Scripture will always be in place. A verse of an appropriate hymn always helps the interest; start it if you are familiar with it. Never let a second of the precious hour pass unimproved. Do your duty. During the meeting remember to pray often for the unconverted persons present. Have you never yet come to Jesus? Yield to him as the Holy Spirit influences you. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Going from the meeting remember where you have been.

REGULARLY LATE.—In every school there are a few who are there either before or exactly at the hour. If

the school meets at nine o'clock, they are certain to be there by nine o'clock, and in order to do this they give themselves a margin. In almost every school there are some who are regularly late. If the school meets at nine, they are never there till a little after nine; if the opening hour is fixed at half-past nine, they come a little after half-past nine. No matter whether it be nine or half-past nine, or two or half-past two, they never get there at the right time. Dear teacher, why not do as the punctual do? They make sacrifices to be in their classes precisely at the hour. Why not you make the same sacrifices? Why not begin now, and say, I will be a punctual teacher?

OUR WORK.—Our labor shall not be in vain. Every stroke laid on as God would have it laid on, will produce its effect. Work done for the love of Christ, and in the power of the Spirit, can not be unavailing. We toil in one corner of a gigantic building, and the scaffolding prevents us from knowing exactly what progress has been made. We are artists with dim eyesight, and in a darkened room painting a picture. The brush seems to fall sometimes without effect upon the canvas. We think that little or nothing has been done. But the day is coming when light will stream in, and the picture shall be seen; when the scaffolding shall be removed, and the building appear in all its fair and glorious beauty—and then, knowing as we are known, we shall know also that “our labor has not been in vain in the Lord.”

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

INSTITUTE PROGRAMME.

THE fullest and best programme that has come under our eye is that of an Institute held in Brooklyn, N. Y., December 16-20, 1867, Rev. J. H. Vincent acting as General Director and Superintendent. It has suggestive features of great value.

The work was divided into two parts; namely, I. GENERAL MEETINGS; II. NORMAL CLASS EXERCISES.

The General Meetings were two—Monday evening and Friday evening. The Normal Class exercises were six—Tuesday afternoon and evening, Wednesday afternoon and evening, and Thursday afternoon and evening; that is, eight sessions, each occupying two hours.

I. GENERAL MEETINGS.

1. *Monday Evening*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises; 20 minutes, The Bible in the Family—Address; 25 minutes, The Bible in the Congregation—Address; 20 minutes, The Bible in the Sunday School—Address.

2. *Friday Evening*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises; 20 minutes, Pastoral Work of the Superintendent and Teachers—Address; 25 minutes, Sunday School Scholars and Teachers at the Social Meetings of the Church—Address; 20 minutes, Home in the Sunday School, and the Sunday School in the Home—Address; Closing Addresses.

II. NORMAL CLASS EXERCISES.

PART 1. *Tuesday Afternoon*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises; 25 minutes, Manners and Customs in the Time of our Savior—Address; 25 minutes, Teachers' Meetings; 25 minutes, Teachers' Meeting Illustrated; 25 minutes, Reports, Criticisms and Remarks on the preceding exercises.

PART 2. *Tuesday Evening*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises; 20 minutes, Jesus the Model Teacher—Essay; 20 minutes, Blackboard Exercise; 25 minutes, Books and other Apparatus for the thorough study of a Lesson—Essay; 25 minutes, The Sunday School Teacher in the Preparation of his Library—Address.

PART 3. *Wednesday Afternoon*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises; 15 minutes, Sunday School Music—Essay; 20 minutes, Prayer in Sunday School—Essay; 30 minutes, Sunday School Gradation—Essay; 25 minutes, Infant Class

Exercises ; 15 minutes, Question Drawer, the Principles of Infant and Primary Class Teaching.

PART 4. *Wednesday Evening*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises ; 25 minutes, The Sunday School Teacher—Essay ; 25 minutes, Use of Illustration ; 25 minutes, Art of Teaching ; 25 minutes, Stereoscopic Views of Palestine.

PART 5. *Thursday Afternoon*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises ; 25 minutes, Importance of Sacred Geography—Essay ; 30 minutes, Topography of Palestine—Address ; 20 minutes, Journeys of Jesus—Address ; 20 minutes, Journeys of Paul ; 20 minutes, Journeys of Abraham and of the Israelites.

PART 6. *Thursday Evening*.—15 minutes, Opening Exercises ; 20 minutes, Sunday School Concerts—Address ; 20 minutes, Sunday School Accessories ; 25 minutes, Cities and Mountains of Palestine—Lecture and Lesson ; 20 minutes, Exercises in Bible History ; 20 minutes, The Sunday School Tabernacle—Address.

In that part of the exercises designated "Teachers' Meeting Illustrated," the members of the Institute were divided in ten classes, four of the classes to take as a lesson Matt. viii, 1-4 ; four classes Luke viii, 16-18, and two classes Romans viii, 14-18 ; and ten gentlemen of eminent ability, but various styles, as teachers, were appointed to take charge of these classes and teach them for a period of twenty-five minutes. The teachers thus appointed were previously notified, and came prepared. The object of hearing three different lessons was to give specimens of different kinds of subjects. The object of having ten teachers was to show many varying styles of teaching. The lessons all went on simultaneously, as in an ordinary Sunday school, the classes being collected in groups in different parts of the room. At the close of the twenty-five minutes the bell called to order, the classes became again a congregation, and each of the ten teachers in turn came to the platform and explained briefly his method of conducting the lesson. By previous arrangement, slips of paper had been circulated among the classes, and every member of a class who chose wrote upon the slip a brief comment or criticism upon the style or manner of his teacher. After the reports by the teachers, these slips were read, and then Mr. Vincent, as General Director, reviewed briefly the whole exercise, commenting upon any salient points.

Each afternoon and evening session had a different conductor.

An absolute imitation of the programme would be neither desirable nor wise. Instead of the address on the Bible in the Family, in the Closet, and in the Congregation, there might be essays or discussions on How to Retain the Older Scholars, How to Manage the Library, How to Correct Irregular Attendance, and a variety of topics strictly cognate to the Sunday school room. Nevertheless, the programme, as a whole, is excellent in an eminent degree.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I. This shall be called the — Sunday School of the — Church at —.

ART. II. Its officers shall be a Superintendent, a Secretary, and Librarian

ART. III. This school shall open at —, A. M., and —, P. M., and each session shall be an hour and — in length.

ART. IV. The officers of the school shall be elected by the teachers, on the first day of January, or the first of April, or the first of July, said election to be by ballot.

ART. V. The annual meeting, or anniversary, shall be held in the month of —, at which time the Superintendent, Secretary, and Librarian shall render reports; and there shall be an address by the pastor, or such other person or persons as the pastor or officers may direct. There shall be a quarterly meeting for business, and a weekly meeting for the study of the lesson, mutual conference and counsel, at which the teachers and officers are expected to be present.

ART. VI. This Constitution may be amended at any annual meeting, and By-laws may be made or amended at any regular quarterly meeting, by a majority of all the teachers. The By-laws may indicate where and when the teachers' meetings, etc., are to be held, and also what penalty, if any, for absence from teachers' meetings shall be imposed.

CONSTITUTION FOR COUNTY CONVENTIONS.

ARTICLE I. This Convention shall be called the "— Sabbath School Teachers' Convention."

ART. II. The object of this Convention shall be to promote the interests of the Sabbath schools in this county.

ART. III. The officers of the Convention shall consist of a President and Vice-President from each precinct in the county, a permanent Secretary, two Assistant Secretaries, and a Treasurer.

ART. IV. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at the meetings of the Convention; and in the case of his absence, the oldest Vice-President present shall take the chair.

ART. V. The permanent Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of each meeting, together with a list of the Sabbath schools in the county, the name of the Superintendent, the number of scholars, the post-office address of each school, and make a report at each annual meeting.

ART. VI. The Assistant Secretaries shall write out the minutes at each meeting, and render the permanent Secretary such assistance as may be necessary.

ART. VII. The Treasurer shall keep a faithful account of all moneys collected for the benefit of the Convention, and report at each annual meeting.

ART. VIII. The Vice-Presidents shall have the general supervision of the Sabbath schools in their respective precincts, collect Sabbath school statistics, and report to the permanent Secretary ten days before the annual meeting.

ART. IX. At each meeting of the Convention a committee shall be appointed to nominate officers: also a committee on resolutions, whose duty it shall be to prepare resolutions expressive of the sense of the Convention on all subjects that have been discussed by them.

ART X. At each meeting there shall be appointed a committee of arrange-

ments, whose duties it shall be to make arrangements for the meeting of the Convention, the entertainment of persons attending the Convention, and to invite such persons from abroad as shall add to the interest of the Convention.

ART. XI. The annual meeting of the Convention shall be on the —.

ART. XII. This Constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the delegates present at any regular annual meeting.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NORMAL COLLEGE.

A NORMAL college was organized by the Executive Committee of the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in New York city, February 8, 1867, its object being to elevate the standard of Sunday school management and teaching in the Church, furnishing facilities for training teachers, and to unite all local normal classes and institutes in a central organization. A Sunday school home normal class may be organized in any locality, or by any Sunday school, and will be recognized as an auxiliary of the college, on the condition that it elect a Committee of Instruction, and that it report its organization and officers to the Recording Secretary of the Sunday School Normal College in New York, and that it adopt the following course of study:

It shall be required of all members of the Sunday School Normal College that they

I. Read carefully the following books: "The Sabbath School," by J. Inglis; "The Sunday School Teacher's Guide," "Our Sunday School Scrap-Book," Binney's "Theological Compend."

II. Study the following books: "Helpful Hints for the Sunday School Teacher," "The Art of Questioning," "The Art of Securing Attention."

III. Attend ten meetings of the class, which shall discuss, by lecture, essay, or conversation, the following themes:

FIRST MEETING.—1. *The Sunday School*: its Relations to the Family and the Church, with the corresponding Duties of the Sunday School Teacher. 2. *Conversation or Essay* on "Gaining the Attention of our Scholars."

SECOND MEETING.—1. *The Sunday School*: its Internal Arrangement, Organization, Officers, Order of Exercise, etc., with the corresponding Duties of the Sunday School Teacher. 2. *Conversation or Essay* on the "Improvement of Memory."

THIRD MEETING.—1. *The Bible*: Books of the Bible, by whom, to whom, where, when, and in what Languages Written. 2. *A Practice Lesson*. [A juvenile class may be introduced or the normal class may be exercised on the above subject, illustrating methods of teaching.]

FOURTH MEETING.—1. *The Bible*: Methods of Studying, with a view to Teaching it. 2. *Practice Lesson*.

FIFTH MEETING.—1. *Bible Geography*, as brought to view in the Lives of Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. 2. *Practice Lesson*.

SIXTH MEETING.—1. *Bible Geography and History*: Palestine: its Size, Situation, Names, Principal Cities, Mountains, Rivers, etc.; its Divisions in the days of Joshua, Elijah, and of our Lord. 2. *Conversation or Essay* on the "Use of Illustrations in Teaching."

SEVENTH MEETING.—1. *Bible Archæology*, as illustrated in the lives of John the Baptist and St. Paul. 2. *Practice Lesson*.

EIGHTH MEETING.—1. *Bible Geography*: Jerusalem: its History and Topography. 2. *Practice Lesson*.

NINTH MEETING.—1. *The Tabernacle and the Temple*. 2. *Practice Lesson*.

TENTH MEETING.—1. *Every-day Life in the Bible Times*: Homes, Weddings, Feasts, Funerals, Modes of Travel, Divisions of Time, Rules and Customs of Trade, etc. 2. *Essay, Conversation, and Illustrative Lesson* on Object, Picture, Blackboard, and Slate Teaching. 3. Assume the following Vow: I do solemnly promise to devote myself, with all diligence, to Sunday school labor. I will endeavor to study the Word of God more thoroughly and prayerfully; to spend more time in reading, meditation, and prayer, with special reference to my work; as regularly as possible to attend all the means of grace; to visit my scholars as their temporal or spiritual necessities may require, and to be punctually present at school and all meetings of teachers.

The present officers of the Normal College are Rev. J. H. Vincent, Superintendent; Rev. D. Wise, D. D., Corresponding Secretary; Rev. W. H. De Puy, Recording Secretary.

THE ROSETTE SYSTEM OF REWARD.

THE Rosette or Badge system of reward is given simply for attendance. Its object is to correct the evil habit of irregularity in attendance. It may be thus described:

1. At the close of the first quarter, give to all those who have been present every Sabbath during the three months a rosette, made by printing—

“—— SABBATH SCHOOL,

Band of Honor,”

on a circular piece of card-board, of the size of a twenty-five cent coin, around which card a piece of very narrow blue ribbon is sewed.

2. At the end of the next quarter, those who have been present both quarters have a white ribbon sewed round the blue. All who have been present during the quarter alone receive the blue, as before.

3. At the end of the third quarter, all who have been present the three quarters have red ribbon added to the white, and those who have been present every Sabbath during two quarters—whether consecutive or not—receive the two colors; those who have been present one quarter, the blue.

4. At the end of the fourth quarter, those who have attended one, two, or three quarters are rewarded as before. Those who have been present for four quarters receive a beautiful bullion star with a red center. These last are called “Star Scholars,” and receive no further rewards for attendance.

5. In order to promotion from one color to another, it is not necessary that the quarters shall have been consecutive. After the fourth quarter the rewards are still continued in the same way. The badges are worn by all who are entitled to them—officers, teachers, and scholars. They may either be taken up at the close of the school, or the pupils may be allowed to wear them home.

MISSION WORK IN CITIES.

SUGGESTIONS TO VISITORS.

1. VISITORS will be assigned one city block, or its equivalent, which will be thereafter their special field for Christian labor.
2. It is desired that every family within your block be visited and a religious influence thrown around them.
3. The object of such visits will be to invite the people to the house of God, to gather them into the Sunday school, and, like the Master, to "go about doing good"—comforting the sick, relieving the destitute, and, by direct personal efforts, saving souls.
4. Within one month of their assignment, visitors will visit every family in their several blocks.
5. After that they will visit, during the first week of each month, every family that will kindly receive a call, or a tract, or religious newspaper.
6. These visits must be strictly religious. Be brief, come directly to your errand, do it, and pass on. Be unobtrusive, courteous, winning in manners, and affectionate toward all.
7. Become acquainted with all the members of a family, and their religious condition, and do good to all.
8. Accompany strangers to the church and Sunday school, and introduce them to the pastor and Superintendent.
9. A monthly meeting of the visitors, for handing in reports and receiving tracts and papers, will be held in the lecture room of the church, immediately after the prayer meeting, on the last Friday evening of each month.
10. The second Friday evening of January, April, July, and October will be devoted to the report of the Superintendent, remarks from the visitors, and prayer for success in this work.
11. Visitors will make as full and accurate a report as possible, giving such incidents or items of interest as may come under their notice.

THE CONVENTION.

BY REV. EDWARD EGGLESTON.

OBJECT.—The objects to be kept in view in a Sunday School Convention are three: 1. To awaken an earnest and intelligent Christian enthusiasm in the Sunday school work. 2. To diffuse information in regard to the best methods of conducting Sunday schools and of teaching Sunday school classes. 3. To devise and organize means for Sabbath school extension within the territory represented by the Convention.

If a Convention did nothing more than to send home the several pastors, superintendents, and teachers present filled, with fresh zeal and enthusiasm in their work, it would amply repay its members for their time and trouble, for this new zeal would infuse fresh life into every school represented.

Besides the knowledge introduced into our Conventions by experienced workers from other parts of the country, there is always a vast store of information in every county and town, which, if brought into a common stock, would greatly improve the methods of labor. To bring together these modes of working, to compare them, and give all an opportunity to select the best is one great object of the Convention.

Not the least important work of a Convention is to organize the territory within its jurisdiction for a thorough canvass with reference to the Sabbath school work.

PREPARATION FOR A CONVENTION.—Where a Convention is already organized, it will be called together by the Executive Committee. Let a new Convention always be called by members of all denominations. A Convention should meet at a convenient season. If in an agricultural neighborhood, it should not be called in harvest. Thorough preparation should be made beforehand, to insure the success of the gathering. An attractive programme should be arranged, published, and circulated throughout the territory embraced by the Convention. Let the programme go into every school. Use the newspapers. Have it announced in all the pulpits and in all the Sabbath schools. *Keep it before the people.* A large Convention is better for every reason than a slim one. Let the invitations be general. Invite schools to send delegates, but have it well understood that *all* Sunday school workers are invited. Make it a mass Convention. It is an excellent plan to request all the Churches in the State, county, or township embraced by the Convention to make the Convention a special subject of prayer in the weekly prayer meetings immediately preceding its assembling, that the Holy Spirit may be especially granted to its members, and that its deliberations may be directed to the glory of God. Pastors should be requested to preach on Sunday school subjects either on the Sabbath preceding or following a Convention. Preparations for entertaining a Convention should be made so thoroughly that there will be no embarrassment, even though it should prove much larger than was anticipated.

OFFICERS.—The officers of a Convention should be selected with reference to two things—their efficiency and their denominational relations. The most important officers are the President and Secretary. The President should have tact, decision, and some acquaintance with the usages of deliberative bodies. He should have tact enough to keep the Convention moving rapidly; he should have decision enough to *stop any body* in any exercise when the time for the exercise has expired. He should not allow the time of the meeting to be consumed in fruitless discussion. *The Secretary* should be a man of the greatest industry and devotion to the work, for upon him will depend largely the success of all plans of the Convention for organization and extension. All the officers of the Convention should be thoroughly alive to their work. They should represent all denominations. Care should always be taken not to provoke denominational jealousy. It will destroy the work of Christ any where.

SPEAKERS.—Long speeches are never wanted. Sometimes it is best to get a good animated speaker to deliver an opening address; but such an address should be eminently practical, full of spirit, and of a kind calculated to give tone to the whole session. If you can not get such an address do not have any. As a general rule, discussions will be opened by some one previously appointed, who will be allowed a little more than the usual time. These speak-

ers, who mark out the line of discussion, should be practical Sabbath school men.

It is an excellent plan to get some experienced worker from some other place. There is a certain freshness about a stranger who has seen different plans from those in use where the Convention is held. But such a speaker should by all means have a practical acquaintance with the Sunday school work.

SINGING.—Nothing helps a Convention more than good singing. By good singing we mean also religious singing. Do not use dull hymns, nor hymns that are not just in the key of the spirit of the Convention. Sabbath school music, full of enthusiasm and of spiritual feeling, is the very best. A good chorister, who understands singing with *devotional effect*, should be selected beforehand to lead the Convention, and the monotony of the exercises should frequently be broken by singing one or two appropriate stanzas.

DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.—About one-half hour of each session should be given to a devotional meeting. These meetings may be held either at the beginning or in the middle of the session. The person leading it should announce that the prayers *must* be *very brief*; that the remarks should likewise be very brief; that all the prayers and all the remarks should relate to the central thought or subject given for the meeting. If printed programmes are circulated in the audience, the announcement of the devotional exercises might be made on them in a form somewhat as follows :

“9 to 9.30.—Devotional exercises : special subject for prayer—The Conversion of the Children and Young People in our Sunday Schools. It is requested that all the prayers and remarks be very brief, and that they all have reference to the special subject above.”

In this way freshness and life will be infused into the meeting, and it will be kept out of the old ruts in which such meetings are apt to run.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION.—*These should always be practical and definite.* They should principally relate to the teachers' work. We give below a

LIST OF SUBJECTS.

The Opening Exercises of the School—Should they always be the same, and in what should they consist?

Sunday school singing.

How increase the attendance on our schools?

The Library—How shall it be kept, and how shall we avoid interrupting the teachers with matters pertaining to books?

Blackboard exercises.

General exercises.

The Bible Class—Who shall teach it, and how shall it be taught?

How shall we retain the young people in the Sabbath school?

By what instrumentalities can we best secure the conversion of children?

Children's Prayer Meetings—How should they be conducted?

The care and culture of converted children.

The Pastoral Work of the Sunday School Teacher—What care can the teacher exercise over his scholars out of Sunday school hours?

How should a lesson be prepared?

What general preparation should a teacher have for his work, and what helps are within his reach?

How should scholars be taught to study the lesson? What helps can they make use of?

The use of Question Books.

By what means can the heart and conscience of a pupil be reached?

How can we best secure the establishment of good Sunday schools in the destitute parts of our own territory?

LENGTH OF SPEECHES.—In all discussions the speeches, except the opening ones, should be limited to five minutes each. This limitation should be written in the programme, and the President should *never* allow a violation of it except by a vote of the Convention.

CHILDREN'S MEETINGS.—These are sometimes held in the evening, sometimes in the afternoon. Such meetings should be model meetings. They should be religious. Their object should be the conversion and Christian culture of the children. The best talkers to children should be selected. The speeches should be short—rarely ever more than fifteen minutes in length, not often over ten. There should not be many of them. Children will not generally listen to the most interesting speakers for more than forty minutes. Two speakers, or at most three, are enough. A child will not carry away more than two or three short and pointed addresses. At all such public meetings of children, one of the most important points is to have the children seated in a body in the center and front of the room.

CHILDREN'S PRAYER MEETINGS.—It is an excellent plan to have a religious meeting for children at eight o'clock in the morning during the Convention. Such a meeting should be in charge of some one qualified to lead, and the exercises should consist in singing such Sunday school pieces as refer to personal experience, in prayer, in silent prayer, and prayer in concert, in short and earnest addresses, etc. Such meetings render a double service in bringing the children to Christ, and in giving an excellent model to the Convention.

PROGRAMME.—We give below a programme:

PROGRAMME

of the — Annual Session of the — County Sunday School Convention, to meet in the church in —, Tuesday, —, 186—.

NOTE.—This programme will be followed strictly. Every exercise will be closed when the time expires, unless the time is extended by vote of the Convention. Speakers appointed to open each discussion will be allowed ten minutes; all others, five minutes; and all speakers will be called to order by the President on the expiration of their time.

FIRST SESSION—*Tuesday Afternoon.*—2 to 2.30, Devotional Exercises; 2.30 to 3, Organization and Election of Officers; 3 to 4, Reports from Schools—their condition, wants, encouragements, and discouragements; 4 to 5, What can we do to Extend the Sunday School Work in our County?

SECOND SESSION—*Tuesday Evening.*—7.30 to 8, Devotional Exercises; 8 to 9.30, Short address from several speakers—Subject, *Are we Sufficiently Awake to the Importance of the Sunday School Work?*

THIRD SESSION—Wednesday Morning.—8.30 to 9, Devotional Exercises; 9 to 9.30, Duties of the Superintendent; 9.30 to 10, The Opening and Closing Exercises; 10 to 10.30, Best Modes of Teaching; 10.30 to 11, Blackboard Exercises, or Object Teaching; 11 to 11.30, Teachers' Meetings; 11.30 to 12, Question Drawer.

FOURTH SESSION—Wednesday Afternoon.—2 to 2.30, Devotional Exercises; 2.30 to 3, How should a Teacher prepare a Lesson? 3 to 3.30, What can we do for the Conversion of our Scholars? 3.30 to 5, Children's Meeting.

FIFTH SESSION—Wednesday Evening.—General Religious Meeting, with brief stirring Addresses from several speakers.

REMARKS.—This programme can be variously modified to suit the wants of different localities, and more of the Institute element can be introduced when the work is sufficiently advanced.

COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP ORGANIZATION.—The first business of a State Convention is to take measures for the organization of the counties; and one of the very most important works of the County Convention is to organize its own towns or precincts.

DUTIES OF THE VICE-PRESIDENTS.—The Vice-Presidents for the township or precinct should—

1. Visit *all* the schools in his territory. If he is a Superintendent, he must leave his own school in as good hands as possible. He can do vastly more good in visiting the schools than in any one school. He should suggest any improvement he may think needful in the schools visited; he should try, as far as possible, to awaken an interest in better ways of working; he should direct the minds of all to the necessity for the conversion of the scholars. In all his addresses to teachers and scholars, he should aim to awaken a deeper interest in the salvation of the souls of all; he should strive to bring about a uniformity of lessons in each school; he should urge the importance of teachers' meetings, wherever practicable; he should inquire carefully how well the neighborhood has been canvassed for pupils, and what proportion of the children attend Sabbath school; he should especially endeavor, in all his visitations of country schools, to impress upon them the possibility and necessity of sustaining the Sabbath schools during the Winter season. All these things should be done with delicacy and caution, that he may avoid giving offense.

2. Organize Sunday schools where they do not already exist. If there is any material in the destitute neighborhood itself, let him make use of it. If it is not the best, he must take it as the best to be had. If there is no one to conduct the Sabbath school living in the neighborhood, then the person or persons must be found in some adjacent district.

3. Call a township or precinct convention. The township Vice-President should endeavor to awaken an interest in the meeting by enlisting the ministers and Sunday school superintendents throughout his territory. He should do this by correspondence, and in his visitation he should speak of the Convention on all occasions.

THE CONVENTION.—The Township or Precinct Convention should be conducted on precisely the same plan as the County Convention.

THE SECRETARIES IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS.—These should always be the very best and most active Sabbath school men in the several districts.

They will generally be the superintendents of the several schools, as there is not usually more than one school in a school district. Where there is no school, elect for secretary the person who would be most likely to take an interest in a school if one were started. Where suitable men can not be obtained, the Convention should not hesitate to accept the services of an active Christian woman, if there be such in the district; and in founding new Sunday schools, it is often the case, in a country neighborhood, that a pious lady is the very best person to be had.

COLLECTION OF STATISTICS.—Upon the permanent Secretaries of the county societies, in the first instance, depends the work of collecting statistics. This work of gathering statistics is highly important, for the facts thus obtained are the basis of all plans for missionary operations. These statistics may comprise the following items:

1. Name of town, village, and district.
2. Name of school.
3. Number of scholars—average.
4. Number of teachers and officers.
5. Number of volumes in library.
6. Money raised for Sunday school purposes.
7. Money raised for benevolent purposes.
8. Number of conversions.
9. Is your school continued through the Winter months?

ENLISTMENT OF THE CHURCHES.—Almost every well-established Church can find some one or more neighborhoods in which it can do the cause of Christ good service by the establishment of Sabbath schools. In selecting such a neighborhood regard should be had to the residence of members of that Church. If a Church has members living in a remote and destitute country district, it is better, in all respects, that it should occupy that rather than any other district; for by this means it will be able to care for its remote members, by giving them work to do, and it will be able to conduct a better Sabbath school through their assistance. A Sunday school under the care of a Church is more apt to grow and thrive than one established in any other way. It is generally better to make a single Church responsible for a Sabbath school than to leave it to such hap-hazard assistance as it may chance to get. It will not do for a Church to seek to excuse itself from this labor by saying that it can not spare the laborers from its home school. You can better spare them from the home school than the destitute neighbor can spare a Sabbath school.

ONE LESSON AT A TIME FOR ALL THE SCHOOL.

BY REV. E. O. HAVEN, D. D.

Should all the Departments and all the Classes of a Sunday School study the Same Lesson at the Same Time?

Some very strong reasons can be urged for this course. It will secure unity of thought and purpose for the day. The conversation that grows out of connection with the school during the week will be likely to be more valuable and

efficient than though scattered upon many topics. The Teachers' Bible Class, presided over by the pastor or superintendent, or some teacher chosen for the purpose for the evening, may embrace all the teachers, since they all have one lesson. The superintendent or pastor, or some visitor accounted worthy of the honor, or all of them, when they come to address the school, at the close of the lesson, or in the second session of the day, if the school has one, will have a leading subject, about which their thoughts will naturally cluster. Moreover, spiritual power, like all other power, is increased by concentration. "A three-fold cord is not easily broken." "Where two or three are gathered together," Jesus presents himself. "One shall chase" only "a thousand," but "two shall put ten thousand to flight."

But says one, "It is impossible to interest an infant class and a Bible class on the same topic. Then, again, classes consist of all grades, from little ones incapable of an abstract thought to mature men and women. Think of a class of five-year-old children and another class of strong, well-stored and disciplined minds examining the same lesson!"

We have thought of it, and confess that it does not seem to us absurd, but very beautiful. Still, we would not sacrifice usefulness to mere theory. There may occasionally be an infant class teacher who can not act efficiently except independently. Let her use her talent, then, as best she can. Occasionally a Bible class may, for special reasons, desire to prosecute a subject different from the others. If thought best, let it be done.

But an ounce of practice is better than a pound of theory. I purpose to show, if it can be done by the printed page, how classes of different grades can be taught on the same lesson, and indicate some of the advantages. In order that the illustration may be perfectly fair, I will take the lesson, in the book which happens to be before me, for the very next Sabbath—at the time which I write—and which I have not looked at till this moment: "Lessons for every Sunday in the year. No. 3." The next Sabbath—when I write—gives me Lesson 14, which is entitled "Pharaoh Drowned," and is founded on Exodus xiv, 4-30.

INFANT CLASS EXERCISE.

After the usual singing and prayer—and the infant class should have its own brief introductory devotional exercise—the teacher might present the lesson in some such way as this:

Teacher—Have you ever heard of Pharaoh?

Undoubtedly many hands would be up to indicate Yes, and some would be entirely ignorant.

Teacher—Was he a good man?

Answers various, settling down into the conclusion that he was a bad man.

Teacher—What became of him?

Class—He was drowned.

Teacher—Was he a strong man? Was he a rich man? Were there any other men with him? Did he ride or did he walk? Did he have any servants? Who were they?

After exercising the class not more than ten or fifteen minutes this way—not long enough to weary them or to allow the attention to flag—let them sing.

Then tell them the story consecutively of Pharaoh's drowning, with all his host, in the sea. Follow it up with any other story of bad people coming to an untimely end, and forget not to inculcate moral instruction.

LOWER CLASSES IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

These classes would either read or hear read the entire Scriptural passage; or if they have committed it to memory, so much the better. Then let them recite it. The "connecting history" may be omitted, or some points in it be stated by the teacher in simple language. This work may require more time than in the older classes; for primary class teachers must explain more, and interest their pupils by conversation more than teachers of older classes.

Teacher—What terrible look troubled this pursuing army?

Class—The Lord looked at them.

Teacher—What did he look through?

Class—Through the pillar of fire and the cloud.

There of course would be a good opportunity for the teacher to interest his class in a description of this terrible scene. He might describe a thunder-storm—the black cloud, the vivid lightning, the loud thunder, trees and animals, and men struck by lightning.

Teacher—What effect did this Divine act produce?

Class—It took off their chariot-wheels.

The teacher here should not fail to describe the consternation of Pharaoh and his host as the chariots began to "break down." The size of the army should be spoken of, and the shouts and screams, amid the thunder and roarings of the waters.

Thus all the simple questions of the book could be proposed, and the difficult questions be omitted, and the whole scene be vividly impressed on their young minds.

The object of the miracles could be explained even to the young classes, and the connection of them with the great work of Christ.

THE HIGHER CLASSES.

All the scholars should be requested to repeat the Scripture lesson. If it has not been previously learned, let it be read at least twice distinctly. Insist upon attention, not as a task, but as a matter indispensable and never to be omitted. If possible, get answers to all the questions. Interpose questions and remarks, to make it sure that the subject is thoroughly understood as presented in the book.

The great difference between these classes and those below is that all the printed questions can be proposed, and more of the same kind; but the teacher should not attempt to investigate subjects in which his pupils manifest no interest.

BIBLE CLASS.

We come now to the highest class in the school. There may be lower Bible classes, but if we show how the class consisting of the maturest minds can be

taught, the process with the others will be understood. The questions printed in the book may or may not be taken as a basis. If they are, no time should be spent in repeating over and over what is already understood. The course of instruction might be something like this :

Teacher—Is there any difficulty connected with the first verse of the lesson?

Pupil—I can not conceive what is meant by "the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians," etc. Does the Lord "look?" Was there any time when he did not see them? The whole thing is unintelligible to me.

In response to this the teacher should be prepared to explain the graphic character of Old Testament descriptions. He should show how the miracles attending the deliverance of the Israelites were exaggerations or enlarged exhibitions of natural phenomena, common in that region of country. He should show how the Egyptians might, if they would, still be skeptical about God's action at the time, while the Israelites would recognize God. There is a fine field of thought for profitable discussion. Perhaps it would consume the hour and end in devout emotion.

But if time allowed, various questions of profound interest would arise. Some might be historical, such as, Is there any confirmation in Egyptian history of the departure of the Israelites? Of the overthrow of Pharaoh? Is this story likely to have been invented if not true?

Some questions might be analogical, such as, Was there any hope of escape in the Israelites just before the miracle? Is there any foundation for the maxim, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity?" Are there instances in history to confirm it? Peter in prison; the Reformation.

Some questions might be literary, such as, What was the advantage of writing a song on this subject? What is the influence of a song? Is there any philosophy in the oft-quoted sentiment, "Let me make the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws?" Discuss religious poetry. Should we sing more or less? Should all the people sing? Is there any song in the English language commemorative of this event? Who wrote it? Can any body repeat it? Who will promise to look it up and give it to us next Sunday, with a brief description of it?

In fine, he must be a poor Bible class teacher, or sadly neglect his business, who could not find food for religious thought in this lesson.

ADDRESS AT THE CLOSE OF THE SCHOOL.

This, too, should be on the main theme. There is scarcely a possible limit to the variety of pertinent addresses that might be made, and yet it is likely that no one of them would have been exhausted by any of the teachers.

The pastor ought to prepare himself to make good Sunday school addresses. Suppose that he knows beforehand that he will have five minutes only to talk to the school after they have been studying this lesson. Five minutes can be wasted in twaddle; they can be consumed in uttering what might have been expressed in one minute. He might in that time depict the scene described here, geographically and dramatically, so that few of his audience would ever forget it. He might make the consternation of the Egyptians and the triumph of the Israelites an illustration of the final Judgment, and describe that. He might speak of God's defense of the right, and of moral courage and the folly

of despair. If his heart is in the work, he will have enough to say without marring the unity of the exercise.

It would be well, also, if all the hymns sung should, as far as possible, harmonize with the lesson.

The foregoing lesson, though taken in order, proves to be descriptive and remarkably adapted to interest every grade of mind, and may not be regarded as a fair specimen. We therefore select another, perhaps as uninteresting or as abstract as any given in this book; namely, Lesson 17, entitled "Lapse of Time." If any subject is jejune and worn threadbare this is the one.

On such a subject it is not important that all the time should be spent in the infant class. It is allowable to introduce a greater variety here; yet it would be easy to awaken in their minds some idea of the length of life and of the importance of spending their time well, and all the hymns sung, and stories related, and thoughts presented should have some relation to the theme. The story, too, of the Israelites, on which the lesson is founded, could be told so as to interest them.

The intermediate and higher classes, in addition to the questions and answers presented in the book, might consider the average age of men now, the great numbers that die in childhood and youth, what moral and religious purposes God intends to promote by appointing death to all ages of both good and evil men, what are the effects of morality and religion on the length of life.

A picture should also be drawn of this great multitude of Israelites wandering about in the desert forty years, till the young children grew to be men and women, and all the fathers and mothers had died. They should be told that this was forty years' schooling in the wilderness; God was their superintendent, Moses and Aaron, under his direction, and other good and pious men and women, were their teachers, and a generation grew up fit to enter Canaan and found a new nation. The origin of this country could be compared with that.

The Bible classes would certainly find abundant material for thought. Some might, perhaps, be advanced enough even to grapple with the difficulties so magnified and perverted by Colenso and infidel writers. How was this great multitude fed in the wilderness? Is there manna there now? May not manna have been a natural production made supernaturally abundant? Had the Israelites flocks and herds? Was not all this designed as a discipline? Have you ever heard about the Sinaitic inscriptions? Who will look up the subject, and give us a short description of them next week? Are there any hymns in our Hymn-Book that refer to this journey?

What is the meaning of the word in the third verse, "Return?" Does that mean that when a man dies he only changes his place? If so, did not the Israelites then believe in immortality? What other evidence have you that the Israelites knew they were immortal? Did Moses think the people were mere brutes? What does Paul say on this subject in Hebrews xi?

It would certainly be needless to suggest to the pastor or superintendent themes to talk about that would preserve the interest. A comparison of the looks of the Israelites when they came out of Egypt and now about to enter Canaan; Moses forty years older; the Israelites mostly young people, armed, trusting in God; in what respect are we like them? etc.

Should no text-book be used, the same course should be pursued.

It may be objected that in small schools no persons are found of sufficient

information and inventive power to make a school interesting on this plan. This objection is groundless. Inability is presented as a false excuse for indolence. Hold a teachers' meeting beforehand. Let every one present his modicum of thought and suggestion there. Let the teachers agree there upon the course to be pursued, and let each one try to do his best. Thus may our Sunday schools be made the fountain of abundant Bible information, and the great barrier against infidelity and the great bulwark of Christ. What is worth doing at all is worth doing well.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

How shall the attendance of children on public worship be secured? As far as possible, have no outside teachers. Let them be members and attendants of the Church where they teach. See that the pastor and superintendent invite the children. Let the teachers, in the classes and at the homes of the scholars, personally urge the matter. If the parents are members, let them take their children with them. Give a portion of the service to the children—one of the hymns, a part of the sermon, and occasionally all the sermon.

How shall I qualify myself as an infant class teacher? Visit the primary schools in your neighborhood, and observe the methods of the best teachers. Avail yourself of every opportunity to visit other infant class teachers, note their excellencies and defects, and appropriate the one and reject the other. Pencil in your note-book any special feature of any teacher you may hear. Read carefully model infant class lessons. Talk with experienced teachers, and subscribe for some well-known Sunday school paper or magazine.

How should a teacher, with no book but the Bible, prepare the lesson? Read it over early in the week; think about it; endeavor to discover the main thought. Find all the parallel passages; interpret one by the other. Talk with a friend about any special difficulties; obtain his criticisms, suggestions, or light.

How ought the superintendent and teachers to be chosen? "What's best to be administered is zest." Each Church, in its own locality and circumstances, can answer for itself. Ordinarily the teachers and those who are practically interested in the Sunday school work, should elect the superintendent; and the superintendent, as a general thing, should appoint the teachers. He will, of course, as a wise executive, confer with his pastor and brethren, and receive and weigh, at all times, their suggestions.

Ought a teacher to be employed in two schools? Not if two separate lessons are to be prepared and taught on the Sabbath. It is as much as any teacher can possibly do well to prepare and teach one lesson. If there is any exception to this rule, it is when the second school is a mission school, or one that has general exercises.

Is it desirable for a scholar to attend two schools? No; for several reasons: 1. A division of interest is always detrimental. 2. It creates confusion in regard to the number of children attending the Sabbath schools. 3. No teacher can pursue a systematic method of education of a child who goes to another school. 4. It gives rise to local jealousies and comparisons of various kinds.

5. Children who attend two schools are deprived of that home attention and culture that it is important all should have.

What disposition should be made with a persistently disorderly scholar ? Maintain at all hazards self-control. By no change of countenance or of voice betray anger. You may express regret or sorrow, but irritation never. If personal, kindly appeal in the school does not succeed, then follow it up by calling on the scholar at his home. Be attentive, and pleasant, and smileful as you meet him on the street or elsewhere. This treatment, persevered in, will work a change if any thing can.

How can I become interested in the work of teaching my class ? By "having the fire in your bones ;" by systematically preparing yourself on the lesson, and by regularly observing your secret devotions, and by becoming acquainted with the personal and home life of your scholars.

What is the best method of becoming rid of an inefficient superintendent ? There is no best method. Each school must consider for itself. Open and fair-hand dealing is better than secrecy or chicanery. It is often wiser to allow the year for which he is elected to expire than to effect a removal. A hint from the pastor or a committee will, in the majority of cases, do all that it is proper to do.

How shall the older scholars be retained ? Make the adult classes an integral part of the school. Ask your Bible class scholars to your teachers' meeting. Have them study the same part of the Bible with the rest of the school, that they may be a part of it, and interested in the current lesson, blackboard exercises, etc. Let the teacher be affable, intelligent, pious, warm-hearted—a man who loves youth, and who, in turn, will be loved by them. The Welsh and Scotch experience little or no difficulty in having all the Church in the Sabbath school. They teach, and believe that the instruction of the school is instruction of the child and the man alike in Divine knowledge. Let the young people have an association or society in connection with the church or Sabbath school, in which they can mingle the social with the intellectual, and let this society have an occasional public exhibition of musical or mental ability and advancement.

How shall our library books be selected ? With care, by a committee of not less than two good men, who shall have either read or shall be in possession of a knowledge of the contents of every book purchased.

If any officer or teacher in a school should make a mistake in the exercises, is it best to correct him at once before the whole school, and in what spirit ? Never. Scholars should not witness the reproof or correction of a teacher under any circumstances. The whole subject of discipline should be considered privately. The superintendent that would publicly reprimand a teacher is wanting in respect for the teacher and for his own office.

How can the Church be most effectively enlisted in the Sunday school work ? Do not act independently. Be deferential, and cordially consult with the office-bearers of the Church ; and make them feel that you regard them as advisers and helpers, and as one in the object to be gained. Teach the children to love the Church, to look up to its ministers, and officers, and members, and to seek counsel and sympathy from them as reliable friends. Keep the work before the minds of the Church ; talk up the Sunday school, and get all to take stock in the enterprise. Let pastors often allude to the Sunday school

in their prayers and sermons. There are some Churches that make candidates for admission promise to work in the school before they will act on their cases. Occasionally have general Sunday school services in the Church, and invite non-sunday school men along with others to make five-minute talks on the subject.

FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL IN AMERICA.

THE first Sunday school established in America was by Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1786, at the house of Thomas Crenshaw, in Hanover county, Virginia. In 1790 an ordinance of the Methodist conferences was passed organizing Sunday schools for the instruction of "poor children, white and black;" such schools to hold sessions from 6 to 10, A. M., and from 2 to 6, P. M., where public worship was not interfered with. In 1781 a young Methodist woman, afterward the wife of one of John Wesley's most distinguished preachers, Samuel Bradburn, first suggested to Robert Raikes their organization, in 1781, at Gloucester. She assisted him in forming the first school, attended with him the procession of ragged children from the school to the parish church, and was one of their most effective teachers. John Wesley was the first man in England to publicly approve Raikes's plan after the latter had published an account of it in the Gloucester Journal, in 1784.

HISTORY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

IN the year 1847 the Corresponding Secretary of the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. D. P. Kidder, D. D., in his annual report, made a plea in behalf of a normal Sunday school.

But no effort at establishing institutes for Sunday school teachers was made in this country prior to the year 1860. At the session of the Rock River Conference, which met in October of that year, the Sunday School Committee reported as follows:

"The importance of teachers' institutes to the educational interests of the country can not have escaped your attention. May we not profitably introduce something similar among us? Such an institute, conducted by our ablest Sunday school educators, could not fail to elevate our standard and improve our system of religious culture."

This report was unanimously adopted by the Conference.

In the following year, at the Galena District Convention, held in Freeport, Illinois, April 16th, the subject of a Sunday school teachers' institute, in accordance with the suggestions of the report just mentioned, was proposed and discussed.

After some discussion and a free interchange of opinion, it was resolved to organize such an institute. A constitution was presented and adopted, and the

next day, April 17, 1861, *the first regularly organized and permanent Sunday school teachers' institute in this country met.*

"The district was subdivided. Subdistrict institutes were held that year at Council Hill, Mount Carroll, Warren, and Freeport. The most gratifying results were realized. The following year three more districts organized institutes. Since that time Sunday school teachers' institutes have been held regularly in parts of the Rock River Conference, and never with greater interest than at present. The denominational institute has also been adopted by the 'Sunday School Union of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Chicago.'"

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS FOR STUDY AND REFERENCE.

THE following list will indicate some of the books which superintendents and teachers will find useful. It can be readily and indefinitely augmented:

BIBLE DICTIONARIES, ETC.—Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, in one volume, various editions, or in three octavo volumes, unabridged; Kitto's Biblical Cyclopedia, latest edition, three volumes; Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, by M'Clintock & Strong; Watson's Bible Dictionary; Robinson's Dictionary of the Holy Bible; Cruden's Concordance; Horne's Introduction; Bible Hand-Book, by Angus; History of the Books of the Bible, by Stowe; Jahn's Biblical Archæology.

COMMENTARIES.—Notes on the Old and New Testament—Barnes; Clarke's Commentary; Whedon's Commentary; Nast's Commentary; Suggestive Commentary on St. Luke and the New Testament, by Van Doren; Lange's Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical Commentary; Harmony of the Gospels—Mimpriss; How to Study the New Testament; Notes on the Parables, Notes on the Miracles, by Trench; Longking's Notes on the Gospels and Epistles; Life and Epistles of St. Paul, by Conybeare & Howson; Watson's Exposition.

SCRIPTURAL GEOGRAPHY, ETC.—Tristram's Natural History of Palestine; Robinson's Researches in Palestine and Physical Geography of the Holy Land; Sinai and Palestine, by Stanley; Coleman's Historical Text-Book and Atlas of Biblical Geography; Vincent's Little Footprints in Bible Lands; Hibbard's Palestine; The Land and the Book, by Thomson; Kitto's History of Palestine; Life Scenes from the Four Gospels, by Jones.

ILLUSTRATIONS.—Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; Moral and Religious Truth Illustrated, by John Bate; Hackett's Illustrations of Scripture; Burder's Oriental Illustrations; Illustrative Gatherings, two series; Scripture Cabinet; The Biblical Treasury.

ORGANIZATION AND INTERNAL WORK OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.—Pardee's Sabbath School Index; Reed's Infant Class; The Sabbath School, by Inglis; Vincent's Helpful Hints; Sunday School Teacher's Guide; Our Sunday School, by Waldo Abbott; Hartley's Pictorial Teaching; Blacket's Young Men's Class; Our Sunday School Scrap-Book; Hart's Thoughts on Sunday Schools; The Christian Teacher in Sunday Schools, by Dr. Steele; The Institute, by J. H. Vincent; the Institute and Convention, by Eggleston.

PERIODICALS FOR TEACHERS.—Sunday School Teacher—monthly—Chi-

cago; The Sunday School Journal—monthly—New York; The Sunday School Times—weekly—Philadelphia; Sunday School Teacher—monthly—London; Church of England Sunday School New Monthly Magazine, London; Sunday Teachers' Treasury—monthly—London; Scottish Teachers' Magazine—monthly—Edinburgh.

PERIODICALS FOR SCHOLARS.—Sunday School Advocate—semi-monthly—New York; The Child's Paper—monthly—New York; The Child at Home—monthly—Boston; The Child's World—semi-monthly—Philadelphia; The Young Reaper, Philadelphia; The Youth's Temperance Banner—monthly—New York; Youth's Temperance Visitor—monthly—Rockland, Maine; The Children's Hour—monthly—Philadelphia; The Little Corporal—monthly—Chicago; Sunday School Missionary—monthly—Cincinnati.

THE PALESTINE CLASS.

THE Palestine Class, as organized by Rev. J. H. Vincent, has for its object the study of sacred history, geography, chronology, archæology, or Biblical antiquities. Its meetings are held on some week-day evening, or Saturday afternoon. All persons—parents, adults, teachers, and children—may be members. The pastor, or some other competent person, may act as President.

The text-book employed by classes now organized, is "Little Footprints in Bible Lands, or Simple Lessons in Sacred History and Geography," published by Carlton & Porter, 200 Mulberry-street, New York, and for sale by Poe & Hitchcock, Methodist Book Concern, Cincinnati, Ohio. Price, 50 cents per copy. This little work contains historical and geographical recitations, geographical songs, maps, map chants, and a Biblical gazetteer.

The maps used are those published by Carlton & Porter: Our new Sunday School Maps—No. 1, The Scripture World; No. 2, The Holy Land.

The text-book above referred to is divided into five series of lessons, corresponding to the five grades of the class. The recitations are usually conducted by the concert method, but to insure personal thoroughness, each pupil is examined separately and placed, according to his advancement, successively in the grade "PILGRIM," "RESIDENT," "EXPLORER," "DWELLER IN JERUSALEM," and "TEMLAR."

Scholars should always bring Bibles with them for reading and reference.

Let each session be short, and introduce as much variety in the exercises as possible.

Always read in concert some Scriptural selection at the opening of the class.

Give all scholars an opportunity to present difficult questions from the Bible, and let the same be answered by the class the week after the announcement.

Give descriptions of sacred localities, distances from Jerusalem, size, present condition, sacred associations, etc. Let scholars often repeat these facts, and record in blank books for their own use.

Give a specified time—two months or longer—to each grade.

Let the teacher or President himself examine all candidates for the first or "Pilgrim" grade. After that, let him appoint "examiners" for the historical lessons, he himself conducting all map exercises in every grade.

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